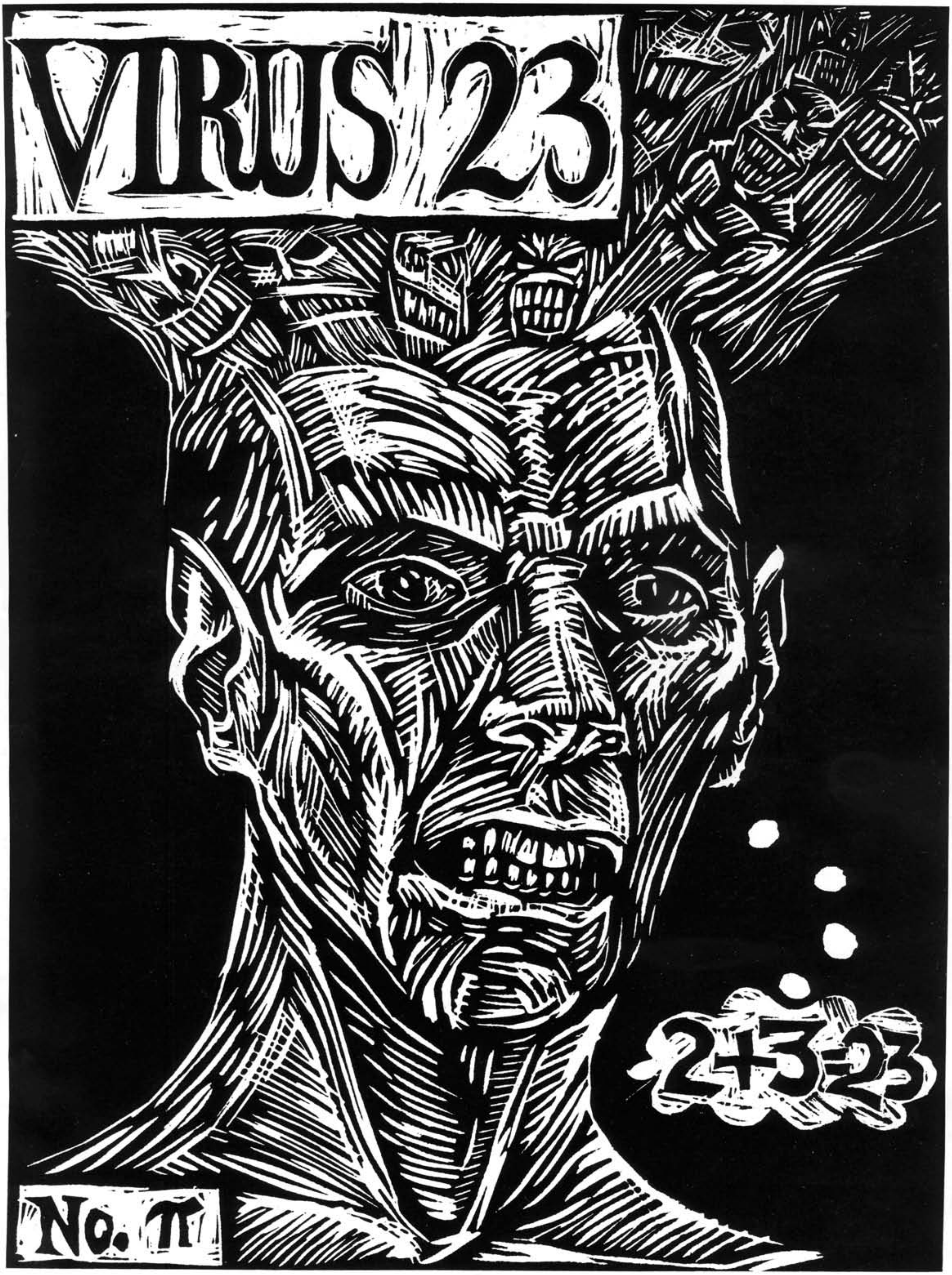

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Contents



EDITORIAL

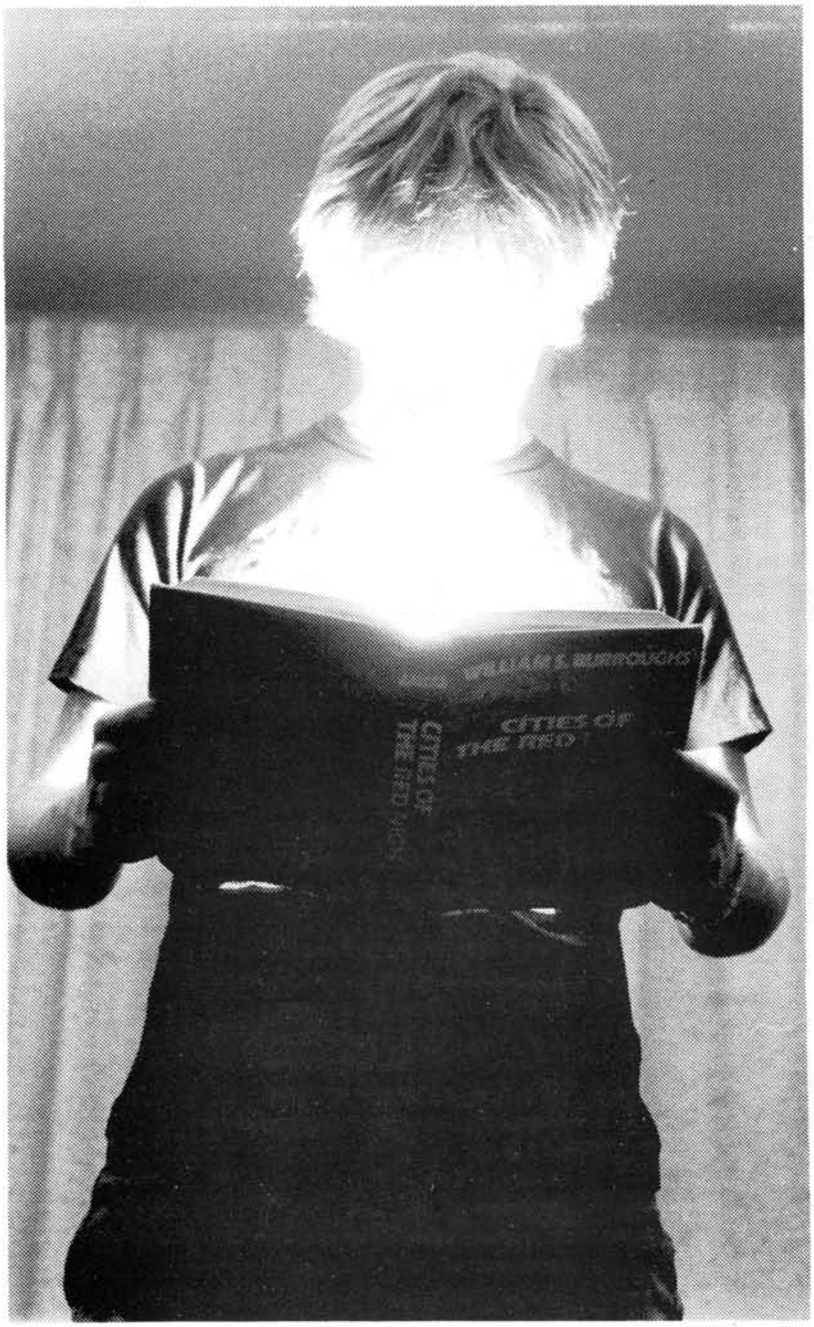
Strategy and Tactics

First off, thanks for the tremendous support we received for our initial effort. Your feedback and criticisms were invaluable, without it this issue wouldn't exist.

Virus 23 is a sporadic journal of things that interest us. Hopefully something in here will be interesting to you as well.

At this point we've firmly grounded our philosophy in chaos theory; therefore we present a wide variety of loosely interconnected material in hopes that this will facilitate strange juxtapositions and create a new level of order. So it's not surprising that the process of creating this 'zine was also rather chaotic.

The focus of each issue will be determined (to a very large degree) by synchronistic information sources, we'll follow any direction that leads us. For example, this issue was originally intended to examine shamanism and mysticism, however our research took us far afield. So we now primarily examine model-making and the process of reality creation and selection; from mass media meme games, to the interaction of the human mind with the universe's energy fields at peak moments of experience. Human beings are always involved in a conscious, or unconscious, search for meaning in our too-short lives. It can be quite illuminating to discover the vast range of interesting paradigms we create to define our place in the universal energy whorls. Hence, this issue is full of models, some of which merge quite nicely with each other and some which stand alone and apart from anything we've ever encountered.



Gazing into the prophetic genius of his mentor William S. Burroughs, Bruce finds he can map Virus 23 memes.

In the future we plan to look at issues of the **"Flesh,"** specifically the mind/body dichotomy. Why are we so uncomfortable with natural functions? Other possible topics include: should subatomic particles be considered 'alive' in some sense?, what fuels the drive for humans to modify themselves, from earrings and plastic surgery to the more *outre* experiences of people like Fakir Musafar?, pornography and splatter films, life after death and any other damn thing that catches our fancy. If you'd like to contribute in any way, write to us.

Peace & Love:
Bruce & Eric

*P.S.- David Tibet of **Current 93** wrote and clarified my description of him in the last issue. He says, "I don't know if I'm 'an anarcho-hippy black magician'- I always thought of myself as a Buddhist- but what's in a name!" Sorry about that.*

*P.P.S.- The latest rumours have David Cronenberg directing J.G. Ballard's **Crash** when he finishes **Naked Lunch**. We have our fingers crossed.*

MIND CONDOMS

Or, LSD Drug Scare II: the sequel



By Darren Wershler-Henry

Language is a virus from outer space. - William S. Burroughs

Memes (defn.): replicating information patterns that use minds to get themselves copied much as a virus uses cells to get itself copied. - Keith Henson [paraphrasing Richard Dawkins' **The Selfish Gene**] in **Signal: Communication Tools for the Information Age.**

Don't believe half of what you see, and none of what you hear. - Lou Reed

Hey, is that LSD? Give me a few puffs! - Mike Doonesbury

Ever heard the one about the people who brought back a chihuahua from Mexico only to find out that it was actually a great big rat? So has Jan Harold Brunvand. Brunvand is by profession an urban folklorist; i.e. he spends most of his time documenting the various per/mutations of the most widespread fictitious memes in existence today. He's heard them all many, many times, and has seen them in many different forms: the stoned babysitter who microwaved the kid, the Satanic implications of the Proctor and Gamble trademark, and the "Mickey Mouse Acid" (aka. "Blue Star" acid) described in the last issue of this magazine. (see "LSD Drug Scare: A False Alarm," **Virus 23** #0, 65).

In order to explain how Brunvand's urban folktales spread, I have to backpedal for a minute. These tales are ubiquitous because they are memes. "Meme" is the name Richard Dawkins has given to what he calls a "new type of replicator [that] has recently emerged on this very planet;" (**Selfish** 142)

> Examples of memes are tunes, ideas, catch-phrases, clothes fashions, ways of making pots or building arches. Just as genes propagate themselves in the gene pool by leaping from body to body via sperms or eggs, so memes propagate themselves in the meme pool by leaping from brain to brain via a process which, in the broad sense can be called imitation.... [M]emes should be regarded

> as living structures, not just metaphorically but technically. when you plant a fertile meme in my mind, you literally parasitize my brain, turning it into a vehicle for the meme's propagation in just the way that a virus may parasitize the genetic mechanism of a host cell. (Dawkins, **Selfish** 143)

The Mickey Mouse Acid meme, i.e. "Someone is giving DANGEROUS DRUGS to our children in attractive and easily available packages!" [Which leaves me thinking, "what about cigarettes?"- ed.], is the subject of pages 162-69 in **The Choking Doberman**, and pages 55-64 of **Curses! Broiled Again!** (two of four non-academic books he has written on urban folklore, the others being **The Vanishing Hitchhiker** and **The Mexican Pet**). The way that this meme replicates itself is by appearing in YOUR neighbourhood (gasp!) in the form of a fiftieth (or so) generation photocopy *similar to the examples shown.* The next thing that happens is Someone-Who-Is-Kind-Of-Stupid-But-Nevertheless-In-A-Position-Of-Considerable-Authority creates some mild hysteria in the community by drawing attention to the alleged "problem."[1] Copies of the original proliferate wildly as everyone does their best to "Spread the Word and Head this Thing Off at the Pass." A few of these copies inevitably get mailed to the next city, and the meme has survived for another generation.

I had a field day when this happened in my old neighbourhood. The aforementioned Stupid Person in Authority who started the panic reaction happened to be my former high school principal, who circulated the bulletin as a memo to the entire staff, which happened to include my brother. After we had a good long laugh about the whole thing, I sent him back to work with a big stack of photocopies of the relevant pages of Brunvand's books as a kind of meme-vaccine. This action gave me no end of satisfaction- not because I had headed off a possible mass panic reaction (which might have been kind of fun, in a sick sort of way), but because it gave me a chance to strike back at the ass who'd squelched my school newspaper, (I'd printed a Harlan Ellison story that contained the word "fuck." Vive la presse libre!). What comes around goes around.

But how do you recognize something like this as a hoax, if you don't have the aid of one of Brunvand's books? Or conversely, how do you convincingly construct a hoax without making the mistakes that are evident in the "Mickey Mouse Acid" document? Brunvand's method is relatively straightforward. He examines the physical form of the message itself, revealing the logical gaps in it that the mind tends to gloss over when hit by the panic that the message content creates. Anyone can do it with a little practice; it's just a matter of learning the conventions that official documents use, and weeding out the ones that don't match. Consider the following:

1. Young children are a lousy market for acid. "[T]here would obviously be too little profit earned from selling drugs to small children to make the risk and the investment worthwhile" (Brunvand, **Choking** 165). Besides, I hear that all of the young kids today are into crack, and have no patience for all the waiting around that an LSD trip entails [could be kind of a Freudian infantile instant Gratification thing- ed.].
2. The alleged "source" of the bulletin sounds impressive, but turns out to be quite vague. "[T]hey tend to include vague references like 'The Valley Childrens [sic] Hospital' or 'according to Police Authorities'" (Brunvand, **Curses!** 60) My copy also begins with "According to Police Authorities" which is only slightly less vague than the nameless "They" that Thomas Pynchon is always going on about, (conspiracy fans take note).
3. The circuitous route that the bulletin has followed would lead me to believe that it didn't come into my hands through any "official" channels, but was mailed in a rather haphazard fashion from place to place by people with unknown motives (Concern? Malice?). The address given as the point of origin is in Berrien Springs, Michigan. From there it seems to have travelled through Ontario ("These stars have been reportedly [again, reported by whom? Think about that.] found in Windsor and Port Huron.... One case has been reported in Chatham.") Is there something going on here that I don't know about? Some kind of sixties psychedelic revival in small-town Ontario? Is Port Huron going to be the Haight-Ashbury of the Nineties?
4. As I've already mentioned, the physical form of the bulletin itself is a good clue; it is not printed in a manner that looks even remotely "official." It isn't on quality stationary, nor are there any letterheads, seals or signatures in evidence, (for a few really well done attempts at this sort of thing, see the article on Situationism in **Re/Search** #11, 176-79). Most of the texts make heavy use of capital letters, underlining, and exclamation points. (Brunvand, **Curses!** 60) In summary, they look more like one of those endlessly photocopied pieces of office humour folklorists call "Xerox-lore" (Brunvand, **Choking** 165). You know the type: "10 reasons why cucumbers are better than men," etc..
5. Whoever writes these bulletins doesn't have a very clear conception of what kind of acid they are talking about (the fact that acid can look like almost anything doesn't really help, but still....) In the course of the text, the acid is referred to as being on a tattoo, a paper "tab" (tablet?) and a stamp. In his own investigations, Brunvand found a kind of general confusion between children's tattoos and blotter acid, and an ignorance of the absorbency properties of the former: "lick-and-stick tattoo paper is not porous enough to absorb drops of LSD, besides which the 'right' way to apply the tattoos is to lick the skin, not the paper" (Brunvand, **Choking** 169). At the time of the writing of **The Choking Doberman**, Brunvard had never come across an instance when a shipment of blotter had been seized that had been printed with anything more elaborate than a blue star design (i.e. no mouse). In **Curses!** the situation has changed slightly, but not enough to invalidate his arguments:

> Back then, I called it "Mickey Mouse acid" because this character was most often on the warnings. but even at that time, the term "Blue Star" had been appearing in many fliers. Lately, the Blue Stars are getting first mention, and the cartoon characters come into subsequent paragraphs. (Brunvand, **Curses!**, 57)

He also poses this question: "[E]ven if a drug supplier wanted to catch small children's attention, why would he select a characterization of Mickey Mouse from an old, relatively uncommon, and distinctly adult-oriented film [**Fantasia**] instead of employing the image of some current kid-craze figure?" (Brunvand, **Choking** 166). Again by the publication of **Curses!**, he had more information. From a New York state survey of 405 law enforcement agencies conducted between February and March of 1988 by the Bureau of Research for the State of New York Division of Substance Abuse Services, less than half of the 1.0 percent of cases between 1985 and 1987 that involved LSD had any images of a blue star or cartoon of any sort on the blotter paper (Brunvand, **Curses!** 61-62).

Of course, there **is** the reference in **High Frontiers #4** to "Bloom County blotter acid- with Mr. P. Opus staring out at you from each little square."[2] Jack Britton, author of the aforementioned article, writes out of Berkeley, which, one would assume, has **always** had more acid floating around than New York state, so Brunvand may be missing the boat on this one.

An Editorial Addendum- I'm afraid Brunvand not only missed the boat, he didn't even make

it to the water. First and foremost, the agents found very little LSD but, of the drug samples that they did find, almost half of the blotter had images of cartoon characters or blue stars! Granted the market wasn't flooded with acid at the time; therefore the meme's primary disinformation concerns the target market for the drug, the means of ingestion and the actual availability in the area, not the images on the paper. Actually LSD art is a very pure form of pop art (designed for mass consumption and instant recognizability) On page 45 of **High Times** #143 July 1987, are printed examples of the finest blotter art they could find. The designs are astounding, and well beyond the ability of this magazine to reproduce, so I'll just plagiarize the text (I would have mentioned the author too, if he/she was listed. C'est la Vie.):

> These examples of blotter acid are true American folklore like whittling, says Mark McCloud, a collector of real acid art since the '60's. A member of the Board of the San Francisco Art Institute, McCloud will display outstanding items from his collection at the Institute. The art spans the entire range of LSD imagery, from the earliest pioneering efforts of the '60's to the most recent prints. "Today, the printing is very high-tech," says McCloud, "The newest sheets are color separated by computer." And, we might add, the imagery too is inspired by current trends, like *King Tut*, a nod to the museum show which travelled the country recently. The "Monkeys in a Barrel" ("more fun than . . . " Get it?) variety was produced just last year. Not surprisingly, the **Grateful Dead** sheet, an incredibly precise, computerized duplication of **Dead** album covers and road show insignia, is both a tribute to the ideas of the original Mouse [not Mickey-ed.] and Kelley art, and to the advanced graphic technology which makes such duplication possible- the result is yet another wild twist in the **Dead**'s ongoing epic, a history which parallels the story of acid art.

Robert Anton Wilson's column in **Magical Blend** #26 reports that: "The big fad in Europe in 1989, unreported by our media, was Gorby acid- blotter LSD with Gorbachev's picture on it. Aficionados insist it's the best acid since the legendary blotter of 1978 that had the Illuminati eye and pyramid on it...". So there you go. - ed.

What interests me the most about Brunvand's work is that "the root idea of contaminated small attractive bits of paper that are in common use seems to have been around [for] at least one hundred years" (Brunvand, **Choking** 168). He cites an article by folklorists Iona and Peter Opie called "Certain Laws of Folklore," [3] which tells how the glue on the back of the "penny-black" (an 1840's postage stamp) was thought to be poisonous, possibly including "human material." The same article mentions a corresponding belief that in 1966, British underworld figure Ginger Marks was rendered down for stamp glue, (not all that unlikely, actually- these things start to seem, well... **plausible** if you start to dwell on them). This meme seems to have been around for a long time, mutating and changing in order to survive.

Memes such as the one described above are more than just an intellectual curiosity, or a new form of entertainment for all the frustrated performance artists running around out there: they are a potential tool for the creation of right-wing hysteria. The acid meme is either an accident or a poorly-executed hoax; either way, it is still fairly effective in the creation of a mild panic. Just think of the effects that a massive well-planned government campaign could generate. Think about that, then think about George Bush's "War on Drugs." In the February 1990 **Spin** magazine's "Antihero" column, William S. Burroughs speculates on some of the ugly side-effects that the infection of the U.S. psyche with Bush's meme-strain generates:

> Take a look at the knee-jerk, hardcore shits who react so predictably to the mere mention of drugs with fear, hate and loathing. Haven't we seen these same people before in various contexts? Storm troopers, lynch mobs, queer-bashers, Paki-bashers, racists- are these the people who are going to revitalize a "drug-free America?" (Burroughs, **Spin** 67)

Maybe Bush means well. Maybe the person who wrote the first Mickey Mouse acid leaflet did too. However, the creation of a national hysteria doesn't strike me as a positive step toward solving **anything**. The chances of the North American public developing a media-critical attitude anytime soon, an attitude that would allow them to see how they're being manipulated, seem slim at best. Maybe what's needed to get people off their asses is a wave of counter-hysteria, an anti-disinformation-meme hysteria. Since we're talking about memes as viruses, the metaphor of AIDS suggests itself: "A media-critical attitude is a condom for the brain. Without it, you're mind-fucked."

You now have the tools to begin to change the situation. Kill this meme; build your own potentially beneficial ones at home- whatever your inclination. Building memes is your gateway to immortality. As Dawkins says, "If you contribute to the world's culture, if you have a good idea, compose a tune, invent a spark plug, write a poem, it may live on, intact, long after your genes have dissolved in the common pool." (Dawkins, **Selfish** 144)
Don't just sit there: Do it.

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Notes

1. Brunvand describes many similar situations in **Curses!**: schoolteachers, factory workers and many, many journalists have fallen prey to this thing.
2. Britton, Jack. "The Swirl According to Carp: A Meditation on the Grateful Dead." In **High Frontiers** #4, 52-55.
3. In **Folklore Studies in the 20th Century**, ed. V. Newall. London: Rowman & Littlefield, 1980. 64-65

"Writing, especially that most abstract kind arising from the Phonetic alphabet, is an extremely abstract form of technology."
— Marshall McLuhan, ***Counterblast***

Dad sells son to buy VCR

CAIRO, Egypt (UPI)- Police arrested a 38-year-old porter for selling his son to buy a video cassette recorder, the semi-official Cairo daily Al Ahram reported.

The paper said Mohammed el Mahdi Essa sold his 3-year-old son Mahmoud to a plainclothes detective for $700 to buy the recorder. Essa has two other children and earned $30 a month.

"I have never stolen in my life, so the only solution to get extra cash seemed to be to sell my son," Essa told police.

Thee Hacker Ethick

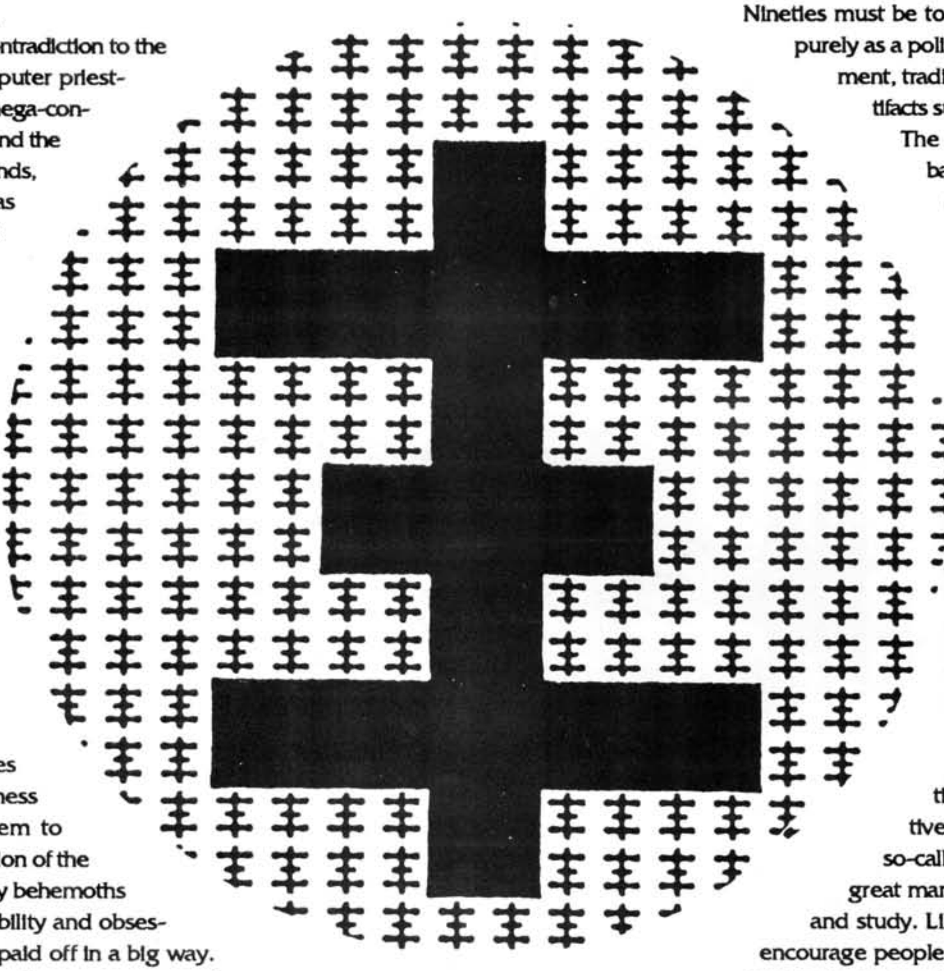
by Coyote 12

One of the most interesting cultural phenomena of the past few decades is the rise of the hacker. The hacker is a loner, she is obsessed with the idea of getting the job done. A hacker doesn't have time to discuss the ramifications or possible benefits of the work being done- she is too busy getting hands-on time at the computer. A certain ethic evolved- that information should be available for free and to all.

This ethic was in direct contradiction to the philosophy of the "computer priesthood," the denizens of mega-conglomerates such as IBM and the like. To their collective minds, the computer world was one which required years of training to enter. Entry codes and the following of a precise etiquette of procedural rigamarole in order to gain access to the same tools the hackers wanted to distribute freely [were implemented].

As already mentioned, the hackers were an obsessive lot- they literally lived computers as close to 24 hours a day as their bodies could handle. This fixedness of purpose enabled them to solve problems in a fraction of the time that it took unwieldy behemoths such as IBM to. The mobility and obsessiveness of the hackers paid off in a big way. Hackers seem not to have been as concerned with applications and ramifications, as they were simply enchanted with the mere act of working on and solving problems- thus they were always eager to take on a new puzzle. Since memory space was so limited in the early '60s, they were particularly interested in saving steps in programs- any hacker who could figure out an algorithm to cut a couple of steps out of a routine was highly respected back then.

The key to "making" the social scene was through your abilities — the hackers were always sharing ideas and projects. If you had a good idea and never followed through with it, your peers might start to think you were either lazy or all talk — a loser. The hierarchy was based on ability within a chosen area-12-year olds who could program well were equals - professors who couldn't program were not! So basically what you had was a utopian subculture based on merit and the making available of the maximum



amount of information possible.

With the entry of "big money" into the computer underground in the mid-to-late Seventies, this ethic seems to have crossed over to the music industry -the punk scene. Here the "kids" tried to wrest control of music away from the technicians, such as **Rush**, and get the guitars into the hands of the, perhaps less efficient, but infinitely more eclectic, music fans themselves. The big lesson of punk was that you didn't have to be a virtuoso to be on a record. Anybody with a guitar and a tape deck could get a record out, if so inclined.

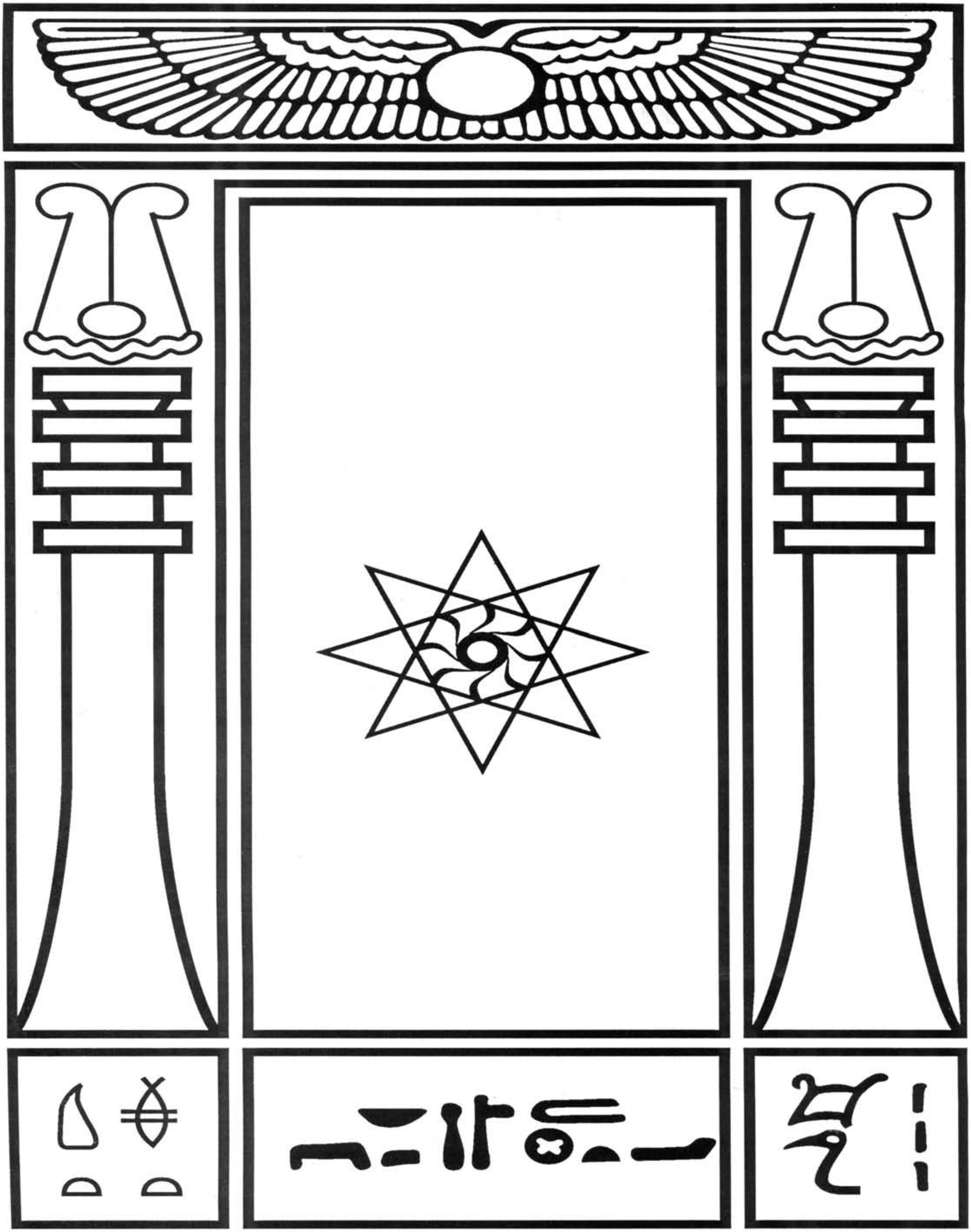
This also ushered in the era of tape networks- garage musicians swapping tapes with similar groups around the world. A musical chain letter, if you will. Suddenly people across the globe were exchanging music and ideas.

The downfall of both of these cultures is that they were essentially dealing in hardware. Hardware always carries with it an intrinsic value. The game plan of the 'hackers' of the Nineties must be to find a way to deal more purely as a political/philosophical movement, trading in ideas rather than artifacts such as software or records.

The concept of a hierarchy based on action/output, as opposed to theory/talk is one that such a movement would do well to appropriate. The concept of total access to information at minimal cost should be a cornerstone of the neo-hacker ethic. Thee Temple ov Psychick Youth has been applying thee true spirit of Thee Hacker Ethick for nearly a decade. We have (to our minds, at least) successfully challenged the notion that, in order to effectively and responsibly use the so-called occult, one requires a great many years of formal training and study. Like the hackers of old, we encourage people to get their own training in a hands-on, user-friendly environment, with as little supervision as possible. We show them the machine, give them a few commands, and turn 'em loose on their own. The only hierarchy is based on workload undertaken and results achieved.

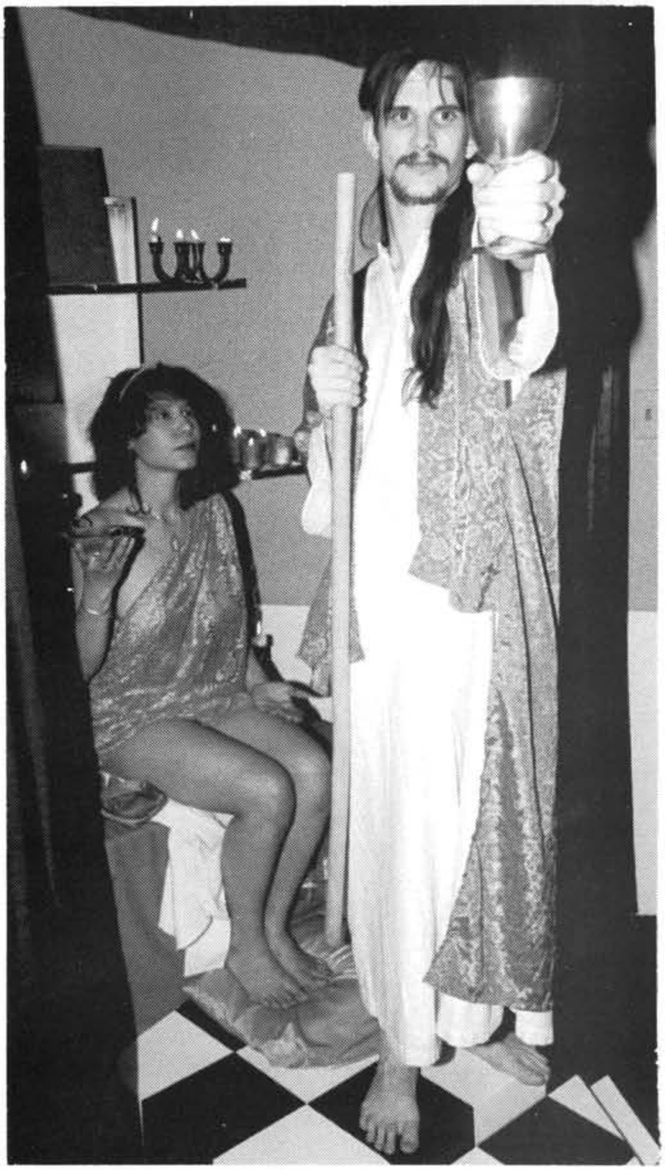
To our knowledge, we are the only organization of our kind in the world. We are challenging the "priesthood" in their robes, challenging them to let down the walls of overmystification and secrecy, for as the Beast himself said,

"Magick is for All!"





MASS, MYTH & MAGICK



A conversation with David Macpherson and Ana Morgaine Anubis

By Bruce Fletcher

David and Ana are self-styled Thelemic ritualists and have been involved with the Ordo Templi Orientis [OTO], in Edmonton since the early '80's. The OTO went to court in California to determine that it "is a continuation of the organization, beliefs, and practices originally established and conducted by [Aleister] Crowley and OTO." [Judge C. A. Legge, United States District Court, Northern District of California: July 10, 1985]

The OTO was back in court to defend themselves from accusations that the group was linked "to a satanic cult involved in the Son of Sam and Charles Manson killing sprees." Anyway, they go out of their way to steer clear of the typical tabloid presentation of "Satanic" groups, you know, evil baby sacrifices in graveyards at midnight and that sort of thing. Rather, to an outsider the core of the OTO seems to consist of a strong sense of ritualism and tradition, and Aleister Crowley's philosophies: for example, "Magick is the Science and Art of Causing Change to Occur in Conformity with Will," "Every Man and Every Woman is a Star," and "Do What Thou Wilt Shall be the Whole of the Law; Love is the Law, Love under Will," form the cornerstones of his quasi-libertarian personal achievement oriented metaphysical system. Crowley died in 1947, the OTO re-formed in the late '60's and the first Diocese in Edmonton appeared in the late '70's.

In 1983 David was consecrated Bishop and Ana was ordained Priestess of the Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica. Since that time they have operated from their temple-space to perform their chief function, the Gnostic Mass, every two weeks, as well as organizing various feasts, rites and rituals year-round. I caught up with them in their kitchen over shandies.

Bruce Fletcher: I'd like to start with a general question. What spurred your interest in the occult, and the magick of Aleister Crowley in particular? At what point did your interest in these matters become overt?

Ana Morgaine Anubis: Different people develop their interest at different points in time, and there's a real variety of them. I was sort of interested from... always. I started being taught the "all-is-one" theory of the universe, dream theory and introduction to astral projection when I was around the age of five. And then fooling around with various, shall we say, non-ordinary realities and non-ordinary ways of experiencing.

BF: At five?

AMA: Well that's when it started.

BF: I'll give you a personal example. When I was about nine, I developed an extreme interest in sneaking out of the house at 2 a.m. so I could lie on the roof of our garage and stare at the stars. I've never stopped wondering just what exactly is out there. I'd mentally project and be off for the night.

AMA: Yeah, it's so easy. They pull anyway. It's hard for me to look at too many stars at once, I always feel like I want to go home. (laughs)

BF: One of my favorite exercises involves visualizing the stars in a three-dimensional pattern. I tend to imagine the brightest stars closest to Earth, which is of course untrue, but I try to place the visible planets in their relative positions. Then I try to visualize the same section of the universe as

It would appear from a planet orbiting a star in a nearby solar system. There is a certain cognitive leap made in the exercise, and it's very interesting.

David Macpherson: Actually that's a very similar to an exercise of Crowley's called Batrachophrenoboocosmomachia [Liber 536, A∴ A∴ Class 'B'] from ***The Equinox***. In effect it's for developing the ability to control a psychic body. It starts by visualizing oneself rising from a point on the Earth and gradually obtaining a global view of the Earth, then continuing outward into the solar system, the stars and what-not.

Back to the original question, my background is pretty different from Ana, until I was about 16, I was whole-hearted rationalist. (laughs) I'd got pretty much to the point of nihilism with it actually; where you can't prove that anything exists independent of one's own perception. So I got into this position, sort of like the Eleatic school's, where Zeno tried to prove that matter and motion are impossible in 300 B.C. or something like that. [Zeno of Elea originated the "Achilles and the Tortoise" paradox. See also Lewis Carroll doing the same for logic and reason that Zeno tried to do for matter and motion] But for the purpose of life in the "real" world, I regarded all "occult" matters to be superstitions, like all religions.

I thought, "This is probably all bullshit, but different people have come up with the same bullshit over thousands of years in different cultures."

BF: So how did you define "occult"?

DM: I mean the popular things that I was aware of at the time, which were astrology, card reading -I'm including ESP and psychic phenomena generally- as well as Christianity and Judaism in the forms that I'd been exposed to them. My parents were atheists, but I'd had opportunities at various times to attend services at Churches. We got some of that in school too, before it was a civil rights issue. (laughs) In the Protestant system we had a daily prayer and a weekly assembly where we sang hymns and stuff. Anyway the combination of exposure to psychedelic substances and conversations with people who were quite articulate and able to criticize my views of reality led me to an interest in "The Occult." Looking at comparisons of the very different, but often strongly parallel, systems that different cultures had developed I soon arrived at a point where I was saying: "This is probably all bullshit, but different people have come up with the same bullshit over thousands of years in different cultures." And so, it must at least reflect some aspect of human psychology that's of interest because it appears to be universal. Then I met someone in the Ordo Templi Orientis (OTO) who showed me a copy of ***Liber Oz***, the first thing by Crowley I'd read, although I'd probably run across his name here and there. ***Liber Oz*** is a statement of the "Rights of Man", and it was totally in agreement with the ethical principles that I'd arrived at by that time anyway. That got me interested in the Order. As an organization it had an ethic that I could agree with and that I'd never encountered in another organization.

BF: Which is?

DM: Absolute freedom of the individual. ***Liber Oz*** starts: "There is no god but man. Man has the right... to live as he wills to do..." and so on. It is basically a statement of individual autonomy, responsibility for their actions and for their perceptions of the world they live in. If you think of each individual as the centre of his/her own universe, then just thinking about that a little bit makes you realize that every other individual besides yourself is also in his/her own different universes, which may be as valid as yours. I think that's what the concept of rights of the individual comes from.

BF: And that made you investigate Crowley further?

DM: Pretty much, yeah. I was interested in the claims that were made for these systems of magick that there was knowledge to be obtained that was quite outside the body of knowledge that science institutions — or civilization generally — accepts. My experience with psychedelics had perhaps given me confirmation in my own experience that there was something else as well. I didn't know what the hell it was, but it was enough to break down my own armoured, little self-contained universe for the experiences were of an intense enough nature.... I have never been prone to hallucinating other objects, or beings, in the room with me or anything like that, it was more a feeling or sensation and a sense of mental freedom. I have an idea that ritual, yoga and that sort of thing, can permit experiences of that kind without the use of chemical modifications of your system.

AMA: It's been my experience that psychedelics can't get you where you can get through other means.

DM: I just read a book about Tibetan Buddhism recounting an analogy that John Blofeld gives for psychedelics. He says that you can imagine a mediaeval traveller who's earching for "Shangri-La" or some paradise, that's across deserts steppes and mountains, but nobody he knows has ever been there. He is going to be very challenged in his belief that the place exists, due to the hardships he suffers. But, if you could show him a picture of the place and prove that it actually exists, it would do a great deal to reinforce his will to get there. Though it would be important to make sure he didn't mistake the picture for the place, and be content to sit looking at the picture. Blofeld uses that analogy in the context of talking about how Tantric Buddhism differs from other forms in that it has so much dramatic ritual and practical technical aspects to it, while the main point of Buddhism is to become detached from experience. But he explains that the Tantric view is that any means to the end is valid, if in fact it does get you closer to the end. The end, being of course, the Void or whatever. So psychedelics can have a value in that sense. I think they did for me. I looked at them as experiments, rather than as something to "party" with. (I use them that way to some extent, but I have an underlying experimental attitude.) I never want to trip more than three or four times a year at most, and I generally have a reason for doing it. I didn't always earlier on. (laughs) But they did break down my pre-conceptions about the possibilities that one can experience in this life.

AMA: Some of the other realities.

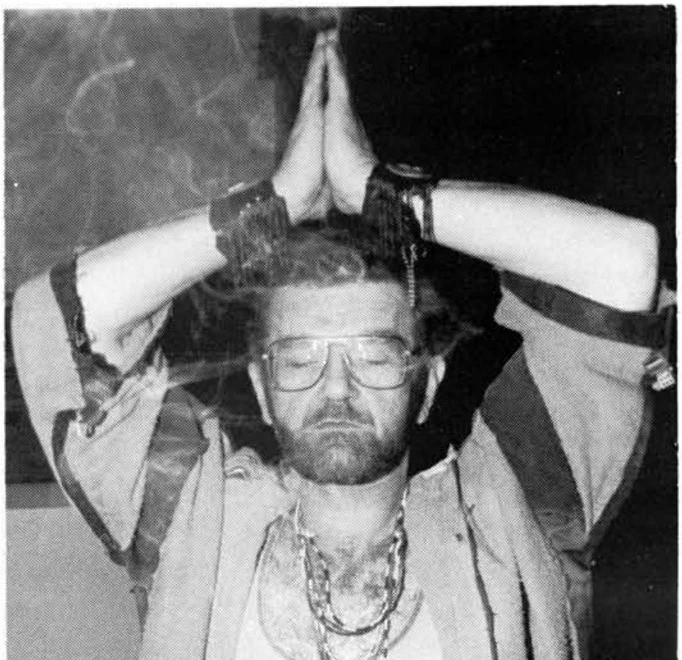
BF: Do you maintain your scientific attitude about the whole thing? Do you believe there's a break between natural and supernatural in the reality that we're able to experience, however subjective that might be?

AMA: No, not really.

DM: The break is just a question of which model you're favouring at the time, as far as I'm concerned.

AMA: I would express that as, which layer of reality you happen to feel like being in.

DM: There are models for phenomena that include what would appear to be supernatural things; energies that cannot be detected by modern physics, beings that are not incarnate in bodies and that sort of thing. But I think that they're metaphors



The Deacon, the third officer of the Mass team, is responsible for the preparations at the altar.

like any other concept, like electrons, protons, and neutrons are metaphors, whatever is most convenient to adequately describe the experience. I think that if demons are supposed to be things in our subconscious, whether they're Freudian repressed things or some other kind of unconscious thing; when analyzing a particular type of behaviour or experience, if a demon explains it better and is consistent within the context of the inquiry, then it should be an acceptable model. Although it leaves open the question of how it exists. but I think that it's like the suspension of disbelief while reading a fantasy or science-fiction novel. When I'm doing a ritual or meditation I believe that it's real. I believe that divine energies are being invoked. But, when I'm thinking about the experience beforehand or afterward I don't necessarily believe it. But it would be fatal to the effectiveness of the ceremony if I didn't at the time. If you don't believe that the actor in a play is the character then you're not going to respond to it.

AMA: The play won't work. Well, for that matter we're all believing that we're here right now.

BF: So is that the level that you're affecting? The fundamental, normal base-state of the human mind is the layer that you have to suspend disbelief from; am I correct?

AMA: Yeah.

DM: It's what you're programmed with, and what your hardware supports, to use a computer analogy.

AMA: The programming starts early in elementary school, and before that, when you're told you don't have imaginary friends.

DM: It starts when you learn language. your hardware actually depends on which language you learn first.

BF: And which culture you're from. Important to discover the universal phenomena, to get beyond the individual models.

AMA: It's interesting that we all reached out to the stars at the same point in time. I was hanging out with my friends designing "rocket fuel" and a rocket because we were going to get the hell off this dirtball. (laughs)

BF: I've come to the conclusion that there is a definite cross-cultural basis for some very strange abilities of the human mind, so now I'm talking to everyone I can find who experiments with methodologies to alter their mental and/or physical reality. The people who develop unique ways of interacting with universal energies break free of stereotypic responses to the world. The more variegated the sample, the simpler it is to zero in on the universals. Which brings us back to Crowley, in a round-about way. Although you come from very different backgrounds, you both use his work as a base. Why is that?

AMA: Well for me, after all these years of doing whatever and exploring a variety of different ways of doing things, I decided that instead of having just a whole lot of practice, I wanted some theory too. So I specifically set out to look for a group of people who seemed to be of "like mind". In the course of this research I ran into Aleister Crowley. The first thing I read was a ritual called "The Bornless One," which is the Invocation of the Holy Guardian Angel. Then I went, "Hey, that's right on! I'm going to go find these people." The more I read, the more they seemed to be of "like mind" and here I am.

BF: Still, there are many ways to achieve the states of being that we're discussing, what does Crowley have that the others don't ?

DM: For one thing, he drew on so many sources. I think one of his most important accomplishments was something that he did before ***The Book of the Law***, and his New Aeon thing and so on. It was ***Book 777*** from around the turn of the century, he worked on it with Allan Bennett, who was also in the Order of the Golden Dawn.

AMA: It's a wonderful cross-reference.

DM: Yeah, it's a tabled cross-referencing of an enormous range of caballistic information, other occult traditions, and pantheons of various religions. It uses the caballistic Tree of Life as a framework. It's called the "Table of Correspondences," and at the time there was hardly anybody working in the field we would now call comparative religion. I think William James was only a decade or so earlier, and Frazer was roughly contemporary. But Crowley's ability to draw on an enormous range of accomplishments from various human cultures is, I think, a really important feature, although most of his ritual is derived from the Golden Dawn, Masonic sources, and the caballistic framework. But in his instructions are a range of techniques

from yoga, western ceremonial practices, meditative mantras and so on. he employed a whole range of techniques. I think that there are very few initiates, or prophets you might say, who are so eclectic or catholic in their scope of vision. So that one thing about his system that interested me in the occult. His sense of humour is another thing about him that's very unusual among prophets, especially the most messianic types, and Crowley had his messianic moments all right. (laughs) I sort of reserve a judgement on those moments, I'm sceptical about everything. Anyway he's capable of laughing at himself and at his students. I think that's important. You see this in other schools as well: Zen, Taoism, and I suppose there's a whole unique brand of Jewish Rabbinical humour out there too. (laughs) Crowley's sort of egotism and sense of showmanship make him very amusing. He doesn't take himself seriously all the time.

BF: Are you drawing a line between his theory and his practice? Or do you believe his practice, the egotism and showmanship, was part of his theory?

AMA: I'm rather sure it was part of his theory. (laughs)

BF: So you think he consciously set out to be "the wickedest man in the world," the stuff of nightmares, and this cosmic pervert type of guy? It's not the best way for a serious philosopher to be remembered.

AMA: Well he was sort of goaded into that one. Mind you, he wasn't a very nice person. (laughs)

DM: I think he enjoyed his reputation in some ways.

AMA: When he got it, he decided to have fun with it.

DM: By the time it got out of control, when there was the lawsuit brought about by the woman who said her boyfriend died after being forced to drink the blood of a goat or something...

AMA: ...and all these horrible scandals...

DM: ...he was just too broke to put up an effective defence. He was living real cheaply in Sicily with just enough money for food (and drugs!), so he couldn't raise enough mony to defend himself properly. I don't remember the exact circumstances. Though I think he rather enjoyed him reputation in his younger days when he published erotic poetry. He could still afford to publish buckram covered limited editions, and he travelled around the world having a great time.

AMA: Those were his wealthy young scoundrel days.

DM: I think he'd basically gotten kicked out of University for a homosexual scandal, or his erotic poetry, or both. (laughs) But I think that tendency in his character made him an ideal spokesman for counter-cultural views of life. By reinforcing the anti-social, repugnant qualities and images surrounding himself he was almost like a filtering device for the audience. Someone who is broad-minded enough to overlook these bizarre qualities in a writer is probably broad-minded enough to have a chance of understanding him.

BF: That's a common technique. It's been my experience that generally, instead of making a work repugnant, most tend to make it arcane, or obsessive and individualistic...

DM: ...like Joyce.

BF: Yeah that's a good example.

AMA: But even so, it still seems to work. What can end up happening for a lot of people is that while they find the work repulsive, they are also subjected to a small strange piece of a different perspective.

BF: Another side to that argument is that they are being made aware of their own innate capabilities and desires, and there's a little spark of recognition. Then the audience may want to see if that artist's investigation into him/herself has any correlation with one's own mindset. It's art as exploration by proxy.



Freak Out
by Donald David © 1990

AMA: Yes, but how many people view that effect in those tems though?

BF: (laughs) Probably not very many, particularly in 1903.

AMA: But they do understand fantasy worlds.

DM: There's a wonderful book by Robert Anton Wilson called ***Masks of the Illuminati***. This guy joins the Order of the Golden Dawn and is warned away from the evil Aleister Crowley and his Satanic approach to the Great Work and what-not. He gets led through this enormous paranoia trip and demonic forces invade his life.

BF: Sounds like every Philip K. Dick novel.

DM: (laughs) Yeah. The book is actually set in this pub in Geneva or somewhere and Einstein, James Joyce and Freud are sitting having a beer, when this guy comes staggering in out of the storm saying he's being pursued by demons. So they sit him down, get him some coffee and get the story out of him. It turns out that Crowley has orchestrated the whole thing, because he's observed that this guy has a very unbalanced view of things and is prepared to believe in "hordes of evil demons who haunt the steps of those who have failed in their undertaking of the path toward the light." Crowley set him up in a conspiracy that becomes his reality. (laughs) I'm sort of drifting off here.

The conversation turns into a discussion of William Gibson's sprawl trilogy and the amazing interconnectedness of modern popular culture.

AMA: I really loved the network [cyberspace] that Gibson writes about. It was great. Very cool and very slick! You could visualize it in a thousand different ways. It's a computer network with the visuals of a telephone commercial: things go zip, flash and bleep in the background, and buildings rise out of it. Or you can see it as synapses firing in the brain. It's a nice metaphor for the collusion of human minds, or the octopus of Jung's collective unconsciousness. It's the macro-cosmic because everybody's in it, and it's the micro-cosmic too. This is your brain, and this is what it looks like when it works. (laughs)

DM: [In reference to the active networking of many avante-garde artists] That's sort of what Jung called the Hermetic Circle of people like Hermann Hesse, himself, and other artists and writers who knew each other. They were all in the same sort of current. I suppose you could look at it in the

context of synchronicity, a lot of these things could be thought of as coincidence. The only difference between synchronicity and coincidence is the meaning that you attach to the events, which is entirely individual of course. Things like Leibnitz and Newton independently discovering calculus within a couple of years of each other.

BF: Do you think it is completely independent? Perhaps they both interacted with the same form of energy. David Young proposed the possibility that synchronicity is simply a heightened perception of the interconnectedness of all things. Therefore one can utilize synchronistic events, in the sense that they provide the individual with more information about the universe they exist in.

DM: That sounds pretty good to me.

AMA: That makes perfectly good sense. It then becomes a question of how far into it you can see. Or if you choose a "different level" view, how many layers down can you manipulate?

BF: So you think a manipulation of energy is involved?

AMA: There can be. If you can see a situation clearly enough, you can see different paths, different possibilities happening from any circumstance that you care to focus on. It's usually something pretty important that you do focus on, and if you're capable of playing with layers, you can go to a different one. Just sort of pull the ones away that you decide aren't right. You just say, "Uh-uh, I'm not going to do those ones."

BF: You pull away from possible paths?

AMA: You just leave the interesting varieties, and the effects filter down from that reality. You can call it synchronicity. You can even call it a result of your fooling around with the buttons and knobs of the cosmic coincidence control centre.

BF: Any exploration of another person's system of thought opens you to new possibilities. The more viable options, the more freedom one has to choose the course of one's life, which I suppose relates to Crowley's concept of the "Great Work." How do you think he meant that concept? What is your "Great Work"?

AMA: I think it's sort of finally figuring out just exactly what on earth you are supposed to be doing on earth. (laughs)

DM: That's one way of looking at it. The realization of one's nature and purpose. It can manifest in a lot of different ways, and in some aspects that's how that term was used in Crowley's order A.·. A.·.. An Adept is someone who had accomplished, or was accomplishing, the "Great Work". There are many sort of small 'A' adepts in various fields, artists like Mozart, who are expressing their genius and adding it to the human culture at large.

BF: So doesn't that include anyone who's productive in any sense? Whether you call it the "Great Work" or not, or are conscious of it or not; isn't anyone who actually does any act of creation, accomplishing the "Great Work"?

DM: It's working toward it, yeah. It seems to me, speaking as one who doesn't believe that I've attained the grade associated with the "Great Work".

BF: The grade?

DM: The grade **5=6** in the system. I'm not initiated in that way, but I think that what is called the "Great Work" involves a sense of certainty, a sense of direct contact with the master program you might say, that would be associated with that attainment.



The Priestess mixes water and salt in the font and genuflects to our Mother the Earth.

Whether those who have claimed it have actually attained it or not, I don't know.

BF: So essentially you're saying that it's an ideal? A goal to strive for and work toward and that you will know it when you find it?

DM: Basically.

AMA: Yeah that's about right. However, you have to wonder about a lot of the things that sometimes happen to you on various occasions.

DM: It may not actually be there. It may just be a tool for development in terms of having a focus as you say. But it's a question of doing the work to determine if Crowley's A.'. A.'. system is indeed a reliable mechanism of obtaining it. You can't pass judgement on it until you've actually done it, and I haven't. There's an immense amount of work that's outlined there to be done in various stages. I think it's one of the most ambitious programs of study one could undertake, as it's laid out in the A.'. A.'. instructions. It includes educating myself pretty completely on human history, civilization and so on.

AMA: It's pretty heavy duty.

BF: Do you think that the rituals involved in the study program are necessary to what you're doing, or is it perhaps a pointer to help some people focus?

DM: Definitely.

AMA: In the initial states it's required. You're going to find that every single element of a ritual is going to have some association with whatever you're trying to accomplish, whether to invoke or evoke something, or whatever.

BF: Do you think that a particular set of steps will cause you to interact with the same form of energy every time those steps are performed correctly, so that different rituals enable you to interact with different forms of energy in a consistent, predictable manner? What do you think that interaction is?

AMA: I think what you're saying is fairly valid as a statement in that all of these different things are reminding you of something. The purpose of that is to get you used to the something. For example in the Gnostic Mass, when the priestess gets used to the energy she's invoking at that point in time, every single piece of the ritual becomes a reminder of that energy. When you have physical reminders of things, they can spark the particular state in your mind in a second.

BF: I would imagine it's a learned behaviour. The more you experience it, the easier it becomes, is this true?

DM: To a certain extent

AMA: (laughing) The better you know your lines [in the script] anyway. But yes reinforcement works.

DM: There is an aspect to familiarity that makes the physical performance of a ritual easier. You can concentrate more on visualization and focus your attention and not be distracted by trying to remember what you have to do next. If we posit that the ritual is a series of stimuli that triggers unconscious functioning, or brings unconscious levels of functioning into your awareness, or whatever psychological phenomenon occurs that causes a change in the state of consciousness, it's like any other form of behaviour. Neural pathways are being reinforced so you can access the same states of consciousnes more easily. It's like learning to use a muscle or wiggle your ears or something. It might take you a long time to be able to do it the first time, but it becomes easier once you know where that muscle is.

Any exploration of another person's system of thought opens you to new possibilities

BF: So what state do you want to be in at the conclusion of the Gnostic mass? Is it for your benefit primarily, or is it for the other participants in the ritual?

AMA: Well, it's for the benefit of the congregation, and it also works to the benefit of the mass team as well.

BF: What is that benefit?

AMA: I once described it as feeling all warm and yellow inside.

DM: It's an awareness of the solar phallic deity. An awareness of the source of the creative potential of energy. Just as the sun is the source of all the energy in this particular corner of the the universe, so the psychic referent of the sun as a symbol is the source of light, life, love and liberty within oneself.

BF: Okay. But feelings are provoked among members of the congregation who have no idea of the symbolic referents in the script, or what it is you're trying to do on an intellectual level. What do you think happens to the people who are exposed to the forces that you invoke, create or interact with?

DM: It's a dramatic ritual. It works like a play or a movie.

BF: But not everyone visualizes the Phallic Sun God.

AMA: No. Just like a movie, no one ever sees how it's produced, they just get the result.

DM: They're presented with a group of symbols that have the same reference in them.

BF: What is the result for them?

DM: It's the same thing as for us.

AMA: The result for them is they usually all come out going; "Oh gee, that felt really nice. I feel really good. I feel happy. I feel content with myself right now."

BF: Do you think it's comparable to feelings that a devout Christian would experience at Sunday Service?

AMA: I think they're perfectly capable of having those feelings with their rituals too.

DM: I think the difference is that ours is perhaps a little more direct and personal. Each individual at our Mass is saying that they are God, and no matter how little their theoretical background is, that's a powerful statement.

BF: I see the Mass as a reinforcement of knowledge of the continuity and interconnectedness of all things.

AMA: Yeah, that's sort of what it is. It's a celebration of the creative forces within the universe, as we collectively 'know' the universe. It makes people feel like they belong to that universe.

DM: *Every man and every woman is a star* doesn't just refer to us as independent centres of universes. Stars radiate. Each of us is, in whatever way, contributing to an interconnected medium just as the light of stars penetrates through space to touch every other object in the universe.

BF: Does a creed like *Every man and every woman is a star* function as a constant reminder of the principles contained in the phrase? Are you, in a sense, consciously hypnotizing yourself?

AMA: One aspect of that is that with everything we do we are consciously hypnotizing ourselves.

DM: I think they have a certain effect that way. Certainly, *Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law, Love is the law, love under will*, and *93* used as a greeting and slogan, is working to that sort of end.

BF: If you have more possibilities open to you, why do you want them, and for what purpose are you going to use them?

DM: Basically there are two main motivations. One is the more intellectual sort, I think the hermetic arts, or whatever you want to call them, are an important achievement in human culture that deserves to be perpet-

uated. I don't see that many people ready to explore or continue them. I think that one hundred years from now they may be scoffed at,or they may lead to the next breakthrough in modern physics. I just think there's a lot of interesting stuff that deserves to be perpetuated, analyzed and promulgated. A more personal motivation is that I'm hedonistic. I want to explore my senses, including any senses that may not be obvious, learn how to use them and make the most of having them.

AMA: Well, whether I want the possibilities or not, they're all there anyway. It's a question of whether I want them to control me, or for me to choose whether or not to exert influence over them. there's a lot more to us as individuals than we see at any given point in time. The same goes for the rest of the universe and everything in it. There's a lot to see and a lot to understand. And if for absolutely nothing else, it's an excellent exercise in seeing alternate possibilities.

BF: Like a brain gym?

AMA: It can be. But that's its most trivial reason for existence. I think its best reason for existence is to try to understand everything that there is in the universe, which is a rather modest goal. (laughs) But hey, if you reach for the stars you'll get to the sky. The more you stretch the further you can go.

BF: How do you think ritual and magick help you to influence reality? Do you think the energy is on a purely physical level, or do you think the energy is mediated through one's mind?

AMA: Whether it's on a purely physical level, or a physical level mediated by the mind, it's going to appeasr to you as the same thing anyway unless you can analyze it.

BF: Let me re-phrase that. Do you think you encounter forces external to the human mind?

AMA: Sometimes I wonder if those alleged to be external are really external at all. At moments like that, the subsequent question is, does it really matter?

BF: Doesn't that put you back into the solipsistic nightmare that there may be no external reality whatsoever? It's the common metaphysical brain-in-a-vat question. It also leads to the possibility that reality is completely malleable, and I don't think there's much basis for that belief.

AMA: I don't think it's completely malleable, but it can be shifted a little.

DM: Most of the effects that I've experienced are in terms of how I feel about reality, and how I experience it, rather than something that can be verified by an independent observer. It's not things like telekinesis or other psychically derived orchestrations of events. I can't report any experiences that would stand up to anyone's hard-headed empirical scrutiny, other than my own. They happened in my reality. I'm not sure if they happened for anybody else. (laughs) So as far as that kind of thing goes, it's an open question to me.

AMA: Yeah, but if anyone else participated, it would have to be happening in their reality as well.

DM: Well I could probably include a few things that happened in a room full of people on acid. (laughs)

AMA: Yeah, when everyone's subject to the multiverse anyway.

DM: But as far as direct physical manifestation as a result of ritual I have yet to witness one.

BF: Doesn't that make you sceptical?

DM: That doesn't make me sceptical, it reinforces my scepticism. (laughs) I'm sceptical about most of the things that occultists claim. There are many though that are slipping through the cracks in my wall of incredulity. Many para-psychological or occult phenomena are very difficult to attempt to test by any accepted methods of science. So many of them depend on things like meaning and consciousness,



The Priest offers the wine-filled cup before the high altar

and those things are very difficult to quantify in any way. A certain conjuction of the planets that exactly symbolizes an event in one person's life is a neat sort of event. It's remarkable because of its meaning mediated through a set of symbols, not by physically quantifiable standards. It's like a language.

Until we can quantify meaning, I don't think we'll be able to scientifically investigate psychic phenomena

Until we can quantify meaning, I don't think we'll be able to scientifically investigate psychic phenomena

BF: You've been ordained as Bishop and Priestess since 1983, what inspired you both to get involved with the Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica, and assume the responsibilties that go with it?

AMA: In my case the role of Priestess decided to take me. (laughs) I'd seen one Mass previous to being drafted to be Priestess. It seemed to like me and I seemed to like it, and here we are. But now it's a lot neater than it was when I was drafted. Doing it a lot you get to understand something about it, I find it's really a beautiful ritual.

DM: It came out of my involvement with the OTO. The Gnostic Mass is a compendium of many of the purposes and techniques of the OTO. We thought it was important that it continue to be performed. It also forms a very good means of access and information for the public to what it is that we're doing. Out of a rather small group of people at the time, I volunteered to take on the responsibility of concentrating on that aspect of the organization. After my ordination as Bishop I did undergo a sort of conversion or metanoia, in that I experienced psychological or emotional effects that I didn't so much before. I think the Mass is an utterly remarkable ritual. As far as I'm concerned, the principal purposes of the church are to perform the Mass, and to provide a channel of access to the "Current" to anyone who wills to expose him or herself to it, without that person having to make any type of commitment.

BF: What is the "Current"?

DM: Well I suppose it's a series of symbols. It's a set of mystical, philosophical and ethical ideas combined with a sort of 'religious' symbolism of Crowley's reception of the ***Book of the Law***, and Nuit, Hadit and Ra-Hoor-Khuit announcing the beginning of the Aeon of Horus, the Crowned and Conquering Child; the spiritual renewal of mankind and all that kind of apocalyptic jazz. (laughs) I may sound irreverent about it, but it is serious. Like anything to do with Crowley there is a sort of self-satire about it, but it's another form of the veil of the mystery.

BF: The more I examine the occult, the more I'm led to believe that it's quantum physics in action.

DM: Perhaps a mechanism for psychic powers is the manipulation of virtual particles or something.

AMA: It could well be.

BF: Yes, and I think that's an area worth exploring. Thanks very much for taking the time to speak with me.

ESP can control random events, researcher claims

A Princeton University engineering and psychology researcher startled his colleagues in April at a major psychology convention by reporting his finding that some people can use extrasensory perception, or some other unknown force, to control random events around them.

While millions believe in such psychic phenomena, practically no scientists do. Indeed, such claims disturb many scientists, who dismiss them along with such pseudosciences as astrology and tarot-card reading.

Roger D. Nelson and a colleague, Dean I. Radin, both engineering researchers at Princeton, studied more than 800 experiments designed to determine whether humans could influence such random events as coin flips or numbers generated by a computer.

The result, Nelson said at a symposium of the Eastern Psychological Association, is a strong statistical case that "human intention" can influence the output of a computer set up to generate random numbers or an electronic circuit that generates random coin flips.

"The effect is not large, but it's statistically significant and it opens up, in my opinion, a lot of work that has to be done on the way humans interact with their environment."

Nelson, a researcher at Princeton's Engineering Anomalies Laboratory, said he had studied more than 800 experiments, conducted by at least 68 researchers, on human effects on "random-event generators."

After ruling out all other possible causes, Nelson said, he had concluded that "it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that under certain circumstances, consciousness interacts with random physical systems."

Nelson, a researcher who chooses his words carefully, said he realized his findings flew in the face of virtually every principle of physics and hard science. But the finding, he said, was statistically "robust."

"One thing I think it means is that we should do some more high-quality studies," he said, adding that his was not the only rigidly controlled study to find some "psychic" or other paranormal effect in such studies.

Foundations of Physics, one of the best-known physics journals, published his research paper in its December issue and, Nelson said, he has received many requests for reprints.

"Of course, I suppose the people who say it's hogwash just won't talk to me. That is, after all, saying that the human mind — from a distance — can change the way a computer adds or subtracts."

"You can't expect to wield supreme executive power just because some watery tart threw a sword at you."

— Michael Palin
Monty Python and the Holy Grail

Hilbert Space: an essay on new physics possibilities

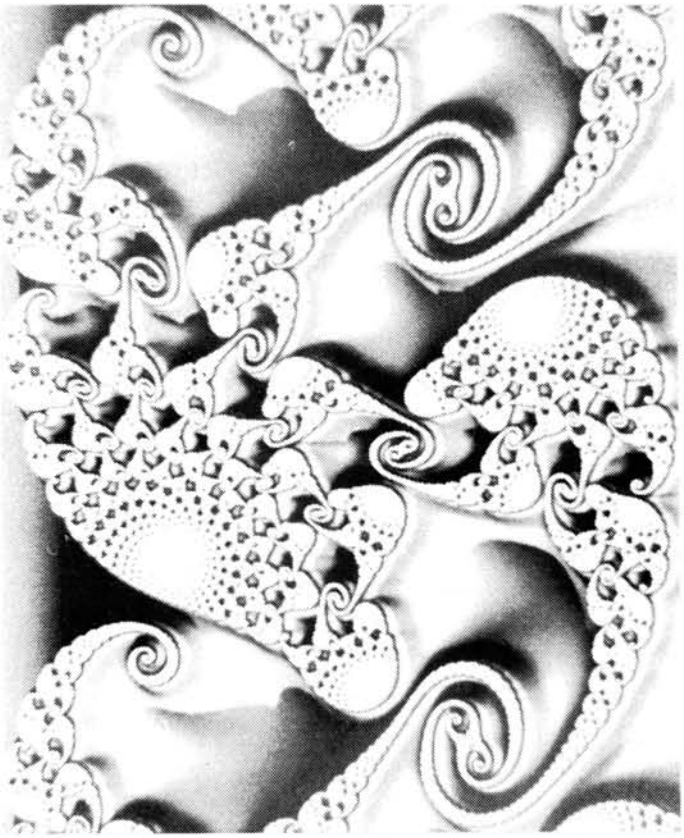
By TOPYUS

If one is to believe the "New Physics" — and it seems foolish not to — then it must be assumed that all existence, three dimensional and otherwise is somehow intertwined in a very complex, yet amazingly subtle interconnectedness. The purpose of this short essay is to pave the way towards an understanding of the scientific theories which could explain, at least in part, why sexual magick seems so effective to its practitioners.

We have to begin with some definitions first. ***The Universe*** *will be assumed to define* ***everything everywhere*** *— all thoughts, all matter, all energy, etc. It is postulated at this time that all the Universe, as previously defined,* ***exists*** *somehow, as a material* ***thing****, on a larger or smaller atomic (or subatomic) scale.*

It is further postulated by physicists that all possibilities and all "time frames" exist simultaneously and inhabit the same space. Due to the peculiar quirks of quantum mechanics, these "reality layers" constantly interact, and, in effect, "trade places," although this term suggests that they were in different space-time locations in the first place, when they were not. We will call these probability layers ***"Hilbert Space."***

Current scientific theory suggests that ***nothing*** *exists outside* ***individual*** *perception — if I die, the world perceived by me dies too. However, there exists a parallel reality in which I survived, and my perception of reality is somewhat altered due to my having survived.*



It must be assumed that all existence . . . is somehow intertwined

Our vision of the Universe thus dictates the form the Universe assumes, our thoughts, hopes, and biases all having a part in the eventual view we call our "world." In a sense, what we call "reality" is nothing more than our own opinion, magnified to the size of the Universe. And your "opinion" is as vast and real -and as fundamentally flawed- as mine.

Scientists "know" that all space-time "events" create new levels in Hilbert Space, that each event influences others, and that these influences exist in a physical sense as "wormholes" or tiny, sub-subatomic threads linking them all together. Why can't we see them?

There are so many ancient religious references to reality-knots (similar to current models of the way certain layers of Hilbert Space interact), cellular and molecular models (ancient cave paintings and petroglyphs are amazingly close to our view of these structures), etc., that it could be argued that at one point in time humans were able, unaided by tools, to perceive things on a much smaller scale than is currently thought possible.

There are several possible reasons, one is that, at one time, there were no names for things, colors, tastes, etc.. Our perceptions were nameless and therefore we could not test the "validity" of a specific perception with our fellow humans. As language evolved, definitions of "things" narrowed and became more specific — where I see a tree, a botanist might see a 90-year old member of the species Quercus, and a Nigerian, the spirit of a dead ancestor. Note that none of these observations is "wrong"; they are based largely on education, in the case of the Nigerian and me, they were learned so early as to be almost reflexive reactions to the stimulus of a leafy green plant with a thick, barked stem. If there were some way to turn back the clock, to be able to view space-time events without this cultural training, it might be possible to see it on a level closer to the physical quantum existence level.

Another reason we have lost touch with quantum "reality" could be based on the fact that all that cellular-molecular activity would merely distract us in an already confusing world. The constant stimuli of cellular division are not of sufficient survival-importance to be constantly noticed. These perceptions, although taken in, are edited out beginning shortly after birth.

Our ancestors also put a great deal more emphasis on "dreamtime" than we do, even today many "primitive" people believe that the dreams they live are just as "real" as waking life. They are right, if modern physics is correct in postulating that "reality" consists of everything we perceive, "real" or not. In other words, Mickey Mouse has as much, if not

more "reality" to him than you or I do, simply because more people have "seen" him. Perhaps in losing touch with the essential reality of dreams we also lost touch with a possibly more "true" model of space-time events than we are able to perceive when we are awake.

Whatever the reason may be, there is no doubt that we miss out on a lot of the action in Hilbert space. How can we tune back in?

It seems like we are at least more receptive to quantum-level "reality" when we are in altered states of consciousness, for example, when we are very tired, we might see little "windows" of blurry, chaotic motion in the periphery of our visual field. Basic molecular physics clearly implies that the "real" shape of objects is constantly changing due to constant and drastic (under certain conditions, molecules will change size as much as one hundred times greater or smaller than their "normal" size) expansion and contraction. Thus, we should "know" that the clear-cut surfaces of objects we see is an illusion. All we are really seeing anyway is light reflecting off of surfaces of densities and levels of reflectivity appropriate to the color and texture we perceive. So maybe the patterns we see when we are really tired are "truer" than the regular reflections we see when fully awake! Maybe our tiredness relaxes our subconscious ordering of space-time events, and it is only then that we see things as they "really are."

But what is "God" if not the group consciousness underlying Hilbert Space?

The patterns we see when we daydream, cross our eyes and stare behind the things that are "really there," are probably closer to the true structure of our continuum than anything else we are capable of "seeing," at least when we are "awake." This could be seen as a scientific basis for Austin Spare's "inbetweeness concept" — the notion that the true essence of an event lies not in the spaces it inhabits, but in between them.

Have you ever noticed the feeling of disorientation that persists after aroused from a reverie?

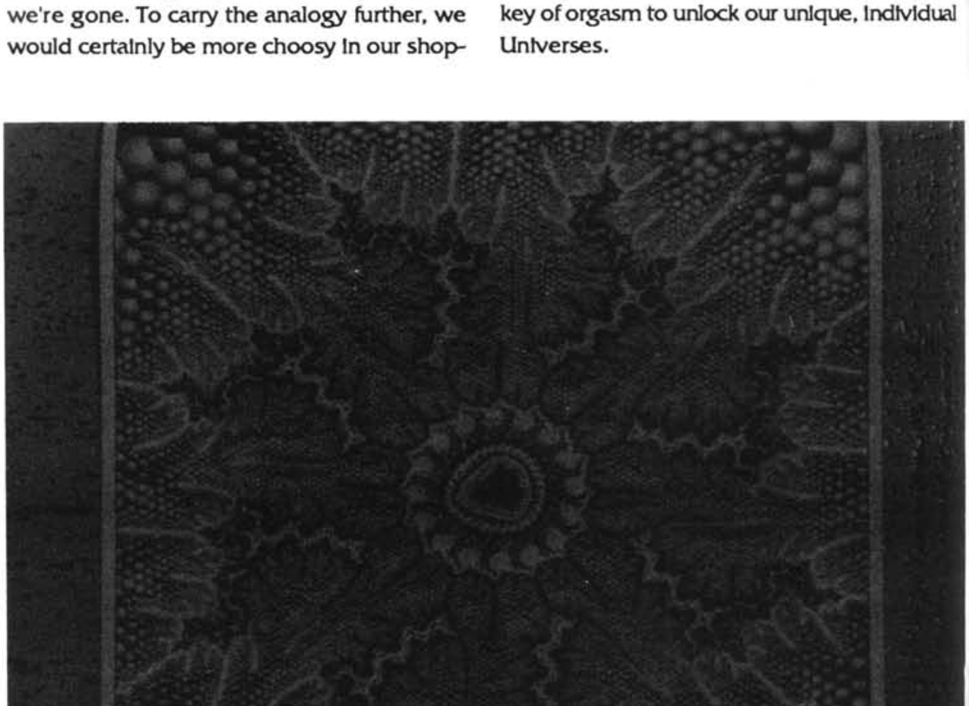
This feeling of displacement is even more acute during orgasm, and in the "afterglow" immediately following it. It is my theory that the orgasm itself is a "key," as it were, to the most vivid levels of Hilbert Space attainable to most human beings. At this point all the "threads" linking us to other events (read people, places, dreams, ideas, etc. -in short anything we are capable of imagining) are exposed to a maximum degree. By "making a wish" at this moment, we are able to influence these relationships, as they are physically connected to us always, but especially so at orgasm.

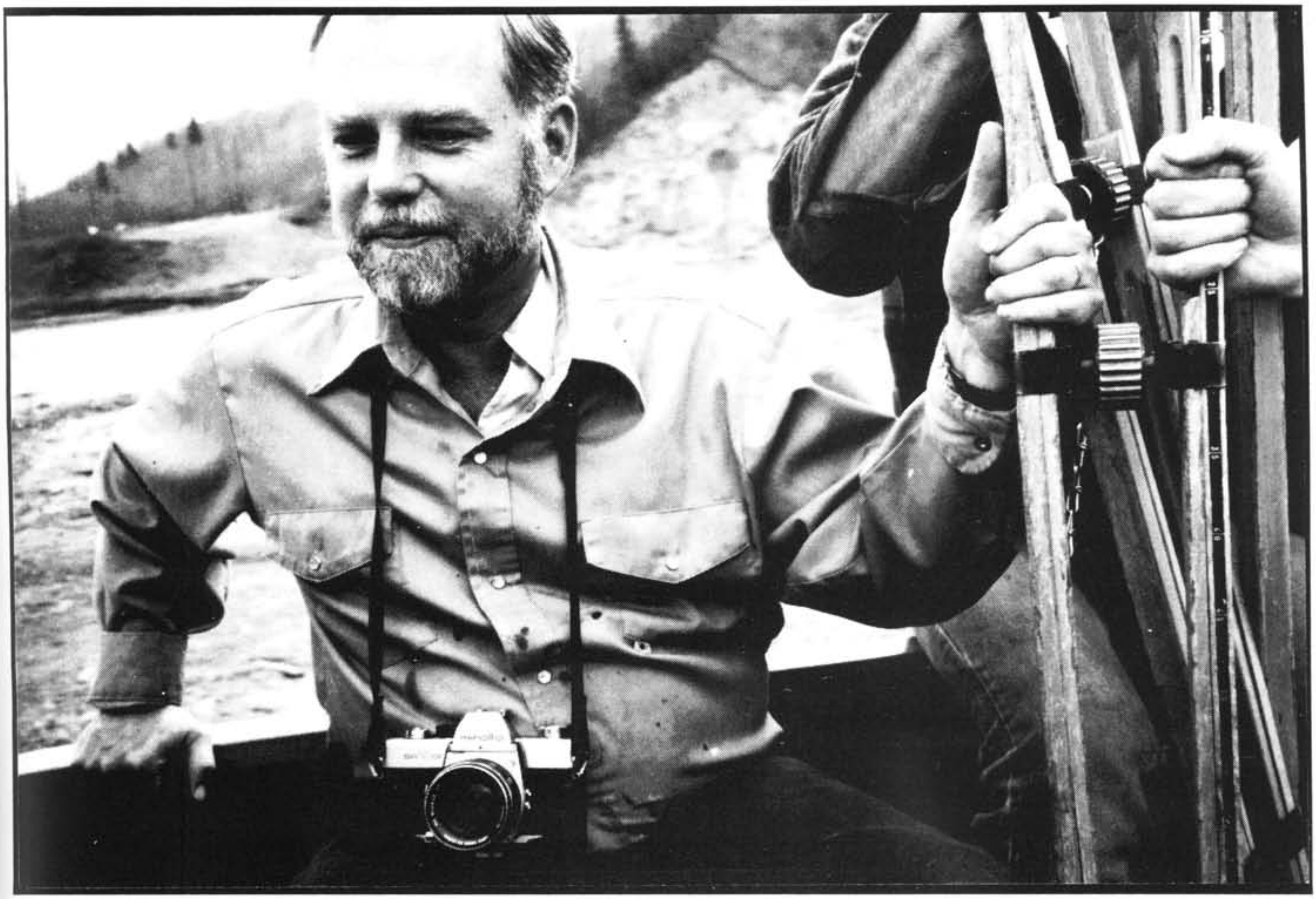
Needless to say, our connectedness to an event such as a boss or former lover is much greater than the connectedness we have to a television star, though both are real. We have a lot more distance and competition to "get through" to Michael J. Fox than we do to events in our personal orbit. Therefore, it is more likely that a dream of a raise will come true than a date with Michael J. ...

We could see the basic practice of making a wish at orgasm as, basically a sort of "armed robbery" — we get what we can in that elusive and fleeting orgasm moment and then we're gone. To carry the analogy further, we would certainly be more choosy in our shopping if we had a no-ceiling credit card. No such thing exists in Hilbert Space, you protest. Wrong — the Hindus developed it centuries ago — Tantric sex practices. The general principles of Tantric sex are to prolong the orgasmic state almost indefinitely, and to regulate the functions fo the body, in coitu, to the extent that the attention can be focussed one hundred per cent on the goal, in orthodox Hindu philosophy, God.

But what is God, if not the group consciousness underlying Hilbert Space? And if the Universe is not created, maintained and destroyed by your individual perception, then are we not all Brahma, Vishnu and Siva rolled into one? This One, Om tat svat. I AM THAT. This one is exactly the bindu, or point-consciousness we all share during orgasm. At orgasm, we are all Gods. If we could orgasm forever, we could be as Gods forever.

Tantric sex makes it possible to increase our access to connectedness threads, and gives us the increased attention to devote to their skillful manipulation. We then have the leisure to actually go into alternate probability frames and "live" them. To talk to the "angels" who inhabit these different, (not "higher" or "lower" than; for that is merely mental orientation) Hilbert space layers. And literally live our dreams, and visit other worlds. For they are all right here, right now. We just need the key of orgasm to unlock our unique, individual Universes.





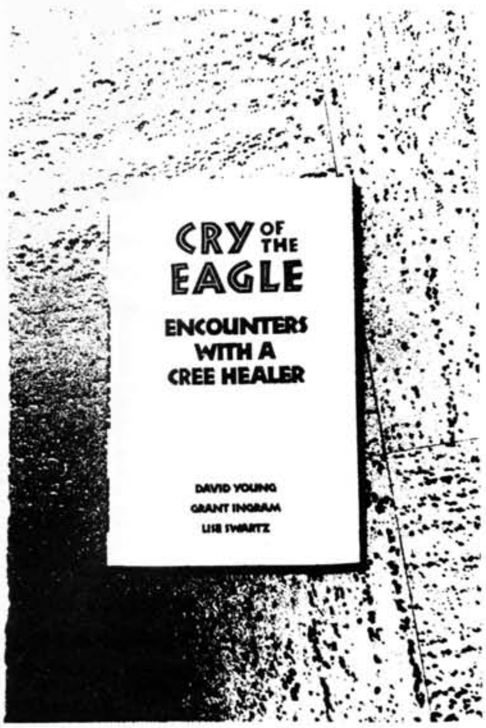
CREE SHAMANISM, QI-GONG HEALING AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE: AN INTERVIEW WITH DAVID YOUNG.

By Bruce Fletcher

Dr. David Young is a Professor of Anthropology at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. His particular interests include the evolution of the aesthetic response, Japanese culture, cognitive anthropology, medical anthropology (studies of traditional North American and Chinese healing therapies in particular), and investigations into what might be referred to as "psycho-energetic" interactions between human beings and the universe.

For the past few years, he's been working with Russell Willier, a Cree healer, for the Psoriasis Research Project in Northern Alberta. Dr. Young has been documenting a series of experiments designed to establish the effectiveness of traditional healing methods when confronted with a disease not well-treated by modern western medical technologies, in this case severe cases of psoriasis. He's also travelled to China recently (pre-Tiananmen square), where he was exposed to a firsthand demonstration of the healing ability of a qi-gong (pronounced "chee gung") master. This is a particularly interesting technique whereby a form of energy (qi) is alleged to be transmitted from a person's fingertips to enable the master to physically alter organic or inorganic material. Qi-gong energy is most often used to promote healing, often in conjunction with acupuncture meridians (as the energy seems to flow through these pathways). However, it is said that qi-gong masters can cause other strange effects as well, like lighting flourescent light-bulbs and bending metal bars at a distance.

Currently Young's working toward expanding the scope of the positivistically orientated social science paradigm, so that the range of "acceptable" areas of study is vastly increased. He is the senior author of **Understanding Stone Tools: A Cognitive Approach**, the editor of **Health Care Issues in the Canadian North**, and his latest book has just sold out in the hardcover edition and will be printed in paperback very soon. It's called **Cry of the Eagle: Encounters with a Cree Healer**, and is written with two of his graduate students, Grant Ingram and Lise Swartz. The book documents Young's work with Willier and the psoriasis project. It's a highly readable, very informative anthropological text aimed at the lay-person. It's also used as a forum for Willier to share his knowledge with Native and non-Native alike, for he wants to help instill a sense of pride and history in the young Native population as well as demonstrating the effectiveness of Native medicine to white society. It really is a great book, and the [cheaper] paperback edition is being released, so keep



an eye out for it. Dr. Young is now in the process of writing a book with an anthropologist from Calgary about visions experienced by anthropologists deeply involved with another culture. Tentatively it's titled, **Being Changed by Cross-Cultural Encounters**. This interview took place in his office at the University of Alberta on February 7, 1990.

BRUCE FLETCHER: Is there anything in particular you'd like to discuss? We can turn this into a publicity session.

DAVID YOUNG: Well, I don't know. I'd appreciate your mentioning the name of the book: **Cry of the Eagle: Encounters with a Cree Healer**. (University of Toronto Press, 245 pp.) It's been reviewed in quite a few places; **Equinox** is probably the biggest name so far, and a number of newspapers. So far the reviews have been good, I haven't seen one bad one yet. (laughs)

He feels the city reduces the power of the natural forces at work.

BF: The thing that impresses me is that you unapologetically present it as "an account of what a Cree medicine man was able to express to outsiders about the way he perceives the world."

DY: I think that's important to emphasize for anthropology in general, because among Native people the views on religion and medicine vary a lot. It's not standardized. That's probably true of any religious belief, but I think that it's particularly true of Native people. Each person has their own source of revelation. So Natives are very hesitant to say that the vision or insight of another Native person is wrong somehow. You really can't do that. It would be very difficult, if not impossible to generalize about Native religion or Native medicine; Cree religion or Cree medicine, or even the beliefs on the Sucker Creek Reserve. It's much safer, and much more accurate, to say, "Well, this is our encounter with a certain individual."

BF: Revelations keep their beliefs very fluid?

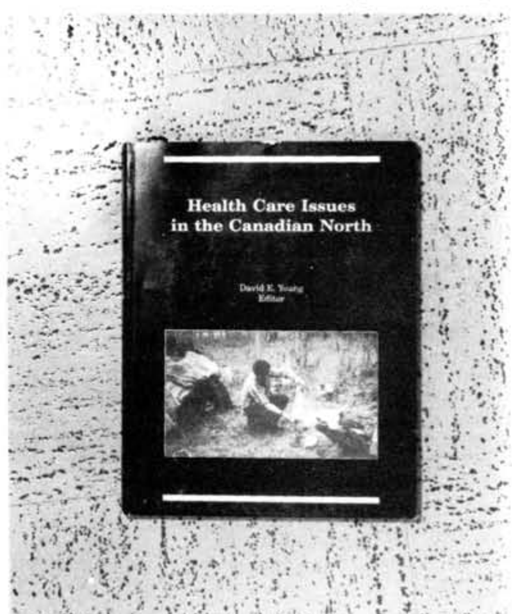
DY: Yeah, it's constantly changing. It's not very well standardized, although I think there are certain themes or certain emphases that are common to Native people in North America: such as, the belief in the Great Spirit. You don't deal with the Great Spirit directly, there are intermediaries called "Spirit Helpers" or "Grandfathers". Also, the importance of the four directions, which is the cosmology associated with animals, spirits, and colours. You get certain themes that seem to be pretty widespread, but then you get down to the specifics and there's a lot of variation.

BF: Have you worked with any shamans, other than Woods Cree?

DY: Not in any depth. I've talked to three shamans who weren't Cree. But I haven't worked with anybody in depth, like I have with Russell Willier. That was about a five year project. And of course, to really understand a fairly complicated system, it takes years. You don't just go in, it takes time. First of all you have to develop the rapport. Native people are naturally kind if suspicious of non-Natives, because they've had a rough time in the past. And generally Native people don't lay everything out in a way that we would call systematic. There are certain things that they don't feel like talking about at a particular time, and other things at other times. Russell was more verbal than a lot of Natives would be, but even with him it took dozens and dozens of tapes. So you have to piece it all together.

BF: What's Russell Willier doing now? At the end of **Cry of the Eagle** you mention his work with the "Traditional Native Healing Society," and the "Healing Centre." What's become of those projects?

DY: Nothing much really. He's been trying to get money to set up a traditional healing centre on the Reserve, but right now he doesn't have the facilities for treating people. When people come to see him, it isn't too bad if they're from the area and they can come for the day, but if they're from far away they don't have any place to stay. Russell's wife has to cook meals for them, and they stay in the house, which creates a lot of family problems. He's been trying to raise money to set up some simple facilities where people can stay for up to a week, as in the case of treatment of psoriasis. They can do their own cooking and have privacy, and Russell's family can have privacy too. But so far he hasn't had much luck raising any money. The government agencies are all saying, "Well it's a worthwhile thing that you're doing, but we've never given government money to fund Native healing." I think that part of what they're saying is that any alternative form of medicine is technically illegal. They're not licenced; it's a matter of, "If we give you money we're setting a dangerous precedent. We're supporting unlicenced practitioners, of which there are many different kinds, not just Natives." So he's had no luck at all on that score. As far as private money;



some people have seen the potential to make a lot of money, because psoriasis is a widespread disease. But unfortunately (or fortunately), he's set up a nonprofit organization, so he doesn't have much luck getting contributions. There are people who are willing to invest, but they want a return.

BF: Not enough altruists.

DY: So that's the situation right now He's been plugging along for the last couple of years, actually he's held out longer than I thought

he might, he's got a lot of patience. But I'm not sure just how long he can go without having any success.

BF: Is there any way to help him out?

DY: I don't know. There is a Board of Directors for his foundation. They need to find somebody who'll put some money into it and help get the thing off the ground. So until that happens.... I also think one of his pressing needs is to have a person working for him to answer his correspondence. There's been a large response from around North America in reaction to the book. And of course, he's busy treating patients who come in all the time. He really doesn't have time to do paperwork or book-keeping for the foundation, or all the other things that go with operating in the "white man's world." There are forms and reports to be filled out, and all these things which Indians traditionally didn't have to worry about. It's a very complicated thing once you cross that cultural border and start trying to operate in the "white man's world." So he really needs some help in that area.

BF: In the final analysis, what's your opinion of the psoriasis research project? Did it work?

DY: Yeah, I think so. The ten patients that he treated here in Edmonton were not unqualified successes. Of the ten, I only know one who completely got rid of it. I've talked to him recently. He's a retired architectural draftsman living in Vancouver. He had psoriasis on his hands; it went away as a result of the treatment and never came back. The others made a significant improvement: over 60 percent as a whole. In addition to that 60 percent, there were a couple of people who got better and then relapsed. But, of the 60 percent, there was only one person who was completely cured. So Russell was kind of discouraged about that. Since then he's insisted that if people want to be treated they have to stay at the Reserve for his intensive treatment.

BF: He feels he has a better success rate there?

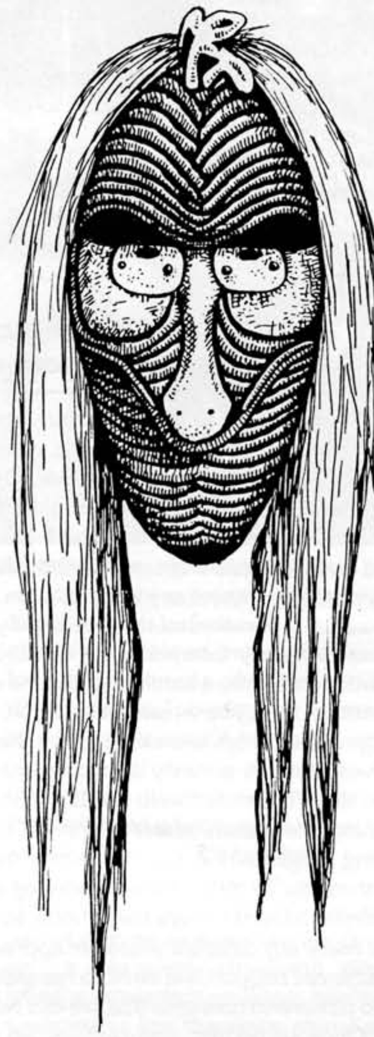
DY: Yeah. For example, when he's working on the Reserve more of it's done outside. He feels the city reduces the power of the natural forces at work. Being in a building further reduces it. There are other factors too. If people aren't being treated intensively, you don't know if they're actually taking the medicine and applying the solution to the skin regularly. The medicine stinks and people have jobs. Again that's a part of the "white man's world." We're not very flexible with that sort of thing. So there are all kinds of factors that work against it.

BF: And there are the psychological factors of the patients as well.

DY: Yeah, there are all kinds of factors. However, he's had the success in terms of patients who have gone for intensive treatment on the Reserve, that's been better.

BF: Is that possible to study?

DY: Yeah, I suppose it would be, if you're able to stay up there on a long term basis. I think the white patients who show up would probably allow themselves to be documented. Native patients generally won't.



BF: Why is that?

DY: Again, because of this suspicion of sharing information with outsiders. A lot of Natives don't even like the idea that Russell has co-operated with anthropologists. They've been burned too many times in the past. So most Native patients won't even allow their photograph to be taken.

BF: I'd like to talk about spiritual beliefs and some of the events that you've witnessed that might appear "magical" to the average individual. For example, in the book you mentioned Willier "splitting the cloud." Would you tell me about that?

DY: OK. We were sitting at his house on the Reserve having coffee with one of my graduate students and Russell's brother. Russell looked out the window and saw a big thunderstorm moving in that was almost on top of us at that point. He got upset because he said part of his job was to keep the rain off the hayfields until the hay could be cut and baled, and so forth. He said, "I shouldn't have been sitting here talking and drinking coffee, I should be outside doing my job." So he rushed out. There's a ceremony that's done in which you're supposed to have an axe to stick into a log, so the head of the axe points at the storm. But he couldn't find his axe. He was frustrated and rushing around, for something had to be done very quickly. He found his hunting knife and stuck that into an upright log. He pointed the tip of the knife, which was sticking out of the log, at the centre of the storm overhead. At this point he prayed in Cree and asked for the assistance of one of the spirit helpers, I can't remember exactly which one, it was the North Wind or something. He asked for the cloud to be split so it wouldn't rain on the hayfields on the Reserve. It was quite a dramatic scene because there was thunder and lightning and he was praying at the top of his voice in Cree. He then burned some incense on the log in a little dish. After the ceremony was finished he said, "Let's jump into the truck and go to the hayfields and see what happens." Grant Ingram, the graduate assistant, and I jumped into the truck and headed for the wheatfields for between fifteen minutes and half an hour. Then Russell turned the truck around to watch the approaching storm. It sprinkled a little bit, but basically it was like being in a tunnel. You could see that on either side it was really black. The clouds came right down to the ground and overhead it was black, but it wasn't touching the ground where we were. It sprinkled a little bit, and a person working out in the field got into his truck for about fifteen minutes. Then it more or less stopped, and he resumed his work. So we sat there and watched it pass over. He said if you catch it early enough it shouldn't even sprinkle. Now it's difficult for us as outsiders, or anthropologists, to make sense out of something like that. It would be awfully easy for people to say it was just a coincidence, and it could be. We don't really know. All we can do is report what we saw.

BF: However, it would be an incredible coincidence when one considers that Willier set out to achieve that result. How do you ac-

count for it?

DY: Well, with these sorts of experiences, I usually don't try to account for it. I'm working on an article now where I'm trying to account for some visions that I experienced after a sweatlodge was put up at my house. I had visions that were typical of Native visions. I'm trying to account for it but we really don't have any anthropological or scientific models. I just say, "Well, here's what happened." I don't think that any of us can say that the Native explanation is wrong, we wouldn't have any basis for doing that. I guess it's a type of intellectual agnosticism in a way. There are lots of things we don't understand. Science is able to understand only a certain slice of reality. We have developed methods, observational techniques and models to explain particular things that we're looking for and looking at. We have some experience in doing that, but outside of that narrow slice of reality it's problematic if you don't have the models or techniques. First of all, you don't usually see the phenomenon in question, and if you did you wouldn't recognize it, and if you did see it, and recognize it, you wouldn't know how to explain it.

BF: Because you have no models?

DY: Yeah. You don't have the intellectual tools to do that. So, I think it would be stupid for scientists to say that anything outside of that slice of reality can't be true. One the other hand, you can't say it is true without the scientific method and the scientific tools to investigate it. So, I usually just say, "This is what happened."

I think what anthropologists can do is called hermeneutics. We try and explain the experience, and the Native explanation of it, in a way that will make sense to non-Natives. We do have some experience with that. If you get too literal a translation of the Native explanation, then people are tempted to say that it's superstition or magic, because you have animal spirits and this sort of thing. But if you get deep enough into the system to understand that system as a whole, you then see that it's very sophisticated and has its own internal logic. Hermeneutics involves translating the system and the particular experiences, using metaphors and whatever is necessary, into a system that makes sense to an outsider.

BF: Or anyone else using another model. You seem to be talking about two equally valid models that describe slightly different slices of reality.

DY: Well, yeah. But the question of validity is hard, even in our own scientific worldview. We don't really know whether it's true of not, even though it has been valuable to



Cree healer Russell Willier and friend make preparations for a sweatlodge ceremony

us. But you have to do some translation. And of course this is true in the area of Christianity as well. The problem with Christian fundamentalism is that people try to take the **Bible** literally. They take stories and teachings that were written thousands of years ago, without any interpretation. Of course, the paradoxical thing is that if you don't have any interpretation or adjustment, or take into account the cultural differences, then you wreak violence on the original teachings and experiences themselves. They are severely distorted because you don't translate them. The big mistake of fundamentalism, in any religion, is codifying religious documents. Setting them in stone for all time and not allowing any interpretation destroys them. And so it's not really any different when we approach a different religion, we have to translate it into terms and concepts that we can relate to. Once we do that, non-Natives can see that there is something very meaningful and sophisticated there that may help us.

BF: Although the key is the translation process, as soon as you run into any experience that is beyond words, or beyond the words of the particular system into which you are translating, don't you run into difficulties?

DY: Well that's true for all experiences. All experiences are beyond words in a way aren't they? There are many dimensions associated with an experience, colour, sound, nuances of meaning, etc. So that's a problem anytime. But if you're talking about things like dreams and visions, or visitations by spiritual helpers, then it does become more difficult. The article that I'm attempting right now deals with visions. I'm using the metaphor of an aesthetic experience. In my case, I had a vision of somebody visiting me at night when I was in my bedroom, a Native person dressed up in Native clothing and so on. I thought it was a real person, and so I switched on the light and it disappeared, naturally. When I described this person to Russell, he recognized him by my description and said that was one of his helpers who often shows up at healing ceremonies and at the sweatlodge constructed near the house. He said he was probably just checking on me, because when you put up a sweatlodge it often attracts evil powers as well as good. So he said the spirit helper will probably hang around and keep and eye on me for awhile, don't be afraid of it.

BF:...as it guarded you when you slept.

DY: Yeah, except that I happened to see it as it stood there in the doorway. Well this is a typical kind of visionary experience that Natives have, but I'd never had anything like this happen to me. In attempting to deal with it, I'm using the metaphor of an art object. When you create a piece of art, it helps to give form to things that deep in your unconscious you are attempting to understand. You attempt to understand something significant that's happening. We can't do it verbally very well, so the artist puts feelings and ideas into a work of art. He may not even understand that work of

art himself in a logical, intellectual way, but giving it substance and form allows the artist to dialogue with his creation and clarify some of these internal processes. It gives you something to relate to that doesn't run away and doesn't disappear, and has a tangible concrete form. I think that visions are the same sort of thing. It's not an hallucination, that has a very negative connotation, but it is giving form to some basic intuitive insights into natural processes. And the only way we can understand natural processes, as we encounter them with our intuitive insight, is to anthropomorphize them. As humans we cannot understand things that are not anthropomorphized. So I think that what happens in a visionary experience is that we anthropomorphize something that is very real, and can be very true. In the process of setting up the sweatlodge, healing people and performing religious ceremonies -the things Russell was doing in our house- we possibly encountered energies. Everything in the universe is energy; I don't make any distinction between natural and supernatural, but we encountered some energies that we don't normally encounter. The energy is there, but it has to be given some kind of form. That energy, as a result of our interacting with it, starts doing things to our subconscious. We start to wrestle with things and see new things, new insights into the nature of reality, but to understand that we have to give it some kind of form.

BF: So you're saying that both Russell and yourself encountered the same form of energy and it provided you with a common symbol for itself; the spirit helper that you both could recognize?

DY: Yeah. Now that's an interesting thing. I was able to give it a form which he could recognize, even though I didn't know what that symbol should look like because it's a different culture. I've heard lots of these kinds of stories, where cultural content is connected with a vision and the person is having a vision that he shouldn't really know about. Actually, I'm writing a book on this subject with Jean-Guy Goulet, an anthropologist from the University of Calgary.

BF: What will it be called?

DY: I don't know, the publisher usually decides that. For the time being, we're calling it **Being Changed by Cross-Cultural Encounters.**

BF: Will it get a wide release, or will it be a specialized journal?

DY: No, it'll be a book. We're going to try to write it as simply as possible, as we did with **Cry of the Eagle**. It will be aimed at a more anthropological and scientifically orientated audience, but hopefully it'll be on a level that ordinary lay-people can understand. Basically we're trying to help create and further a new paradigm in the social sciences which is currently developing. It's a much broader based paradigm than the positivist one, which most of us inherited.

BF: What new paradigm? I think it may be the one I'm schooled in. (laughs)

DY: Well maybe so. In anthropology we don't have a single name for it yet. We've got things like hermeneutics and phenomenonlogy, which are two ways of getting at it. We've got parts of existentialism, cognitive and symbolic anthropology, and all of these things which focus on meaning...

BF: ...and subjective reality.

DY: Yeah, that's what I would call meaning. In other words, not so much what the physical explanation of a phenomenon is, but what it means. Focussing on the meaning of an event is what's important, at least from a social science perspective. Now that's quite different than the paradigm that I inherited when I was in school, which was still a very positivistic one.



Dr. David Young being healed by A qi-gong master in China

BF: Looking for explanations?

DY: Yeah, stimulus response psychology was part of that, cause and effect explanations etc., it was pretty automatic. Whereas when you interject meaning, two people supposedly see the same stimulus, but they'll interpret it differently because of different cultural backgrounds or past experiences. It's not really the same stimulus is it? So-called "normal" or traditional science can't handle that, because either you have a stimulus or you don't. You can't have as many stimuli as you've got people, that's hard for the old-fashioned scientist to handle. That's what I mean by the new paradigm. As you say, it's been emerging for a number of years, it just hasn't been pulled together yet into a consistent form. It doesn't even have a name.

BF: Could you tell me a little more about **Being Changed by Cross-Cultural Encounters**?

DY: We've collected experiences from anthropologists who have worked with Native people. It's very common for these [visionary] experiences to carry the cultural content of the people the anthropologist is working with. How's that cultural content get in there? To me that indicates that it's not an hallucination. An hallucination would come strictly out of your own mind and you wouldn't know that stuff. So there's some sort of communication where content is being added to the formative process. You form that energy into an anthropomorphic form that you can talk with or see or interact with. Now to me, this is probably not a mystical process. There could be nothing mysterious about it, if we really understood it. But we don't understand it because we don't have the models for it. It's really a very common experience among anthropologists but they haven't talked about it much in the past because they didn't want people to think they were going off the deep end. But it's so common that it seems unlikely that all of these people have psychological problems.

BF: Perhaps everyone attracted to anthropology has acute schizophrenia.

DY: (laughs) Well, I know that in my case I've never been to see a psychiatrist, so the experiences didn't threaten me and make me doubt my sanity. But somehow we've got to have a way of dealing with it. We can't overlook a whole area of experience just because it goes beyond our way of dealing with it. We have to start dealing with it, and so that's what we're attempting to do in this new book.

BF: So are you developing a model for this type of experience?

DY: We're trying to. What we've done is find eight anthropologists who are willing to talk about these experiences, and have them to model their experiences. After we've got all this information together, we'll see what kind of common themes there might be and try to develop an overall model.

BF: So you don't have a theoretical base to start with as yet?

DY: No, not really. In the article that I'm writing right now about my own experience, I use an artistic metaphor. But metaphors are part of this hermeneutic or semiotic strategy. It's not really a scientific explanation in the sense of being able to describe what that energy is. For example, does the energy you give form to in a vision, and by vision I don't mean a dream because it's more concrete than that, does that energy and form have any existence independent of your own perception?

BF: If two people see the vision at once, would that be the "objective" correlation necessary for confirmation?

DY: Well I don't know. Some of the stories we've run into have that as a common theme, more than one person will share an experience. Is that enough to satisfy scientific canons of validity? I doubt it. I doubt it would make that much difference if you are a positivist. I think to really satisfy the "hard-core" scientist you would have to be able to take a photograph of it, (laughs), or be able to reproduce it, or measure the energy in some way that's completely non-subjective and bypasses the perceptive channels. Maybe that's possible and maybe it's not, we haven't tried to do that. And I'm not sure that it's a worthwhile thing for anthropologists to try and do.

BF: Why do you say that?

DY: I'm not sure whether our task as anthropologists is to do the kind of job that a physicist would be better equipped to do, to document the kind of energy that's involved. Is it electromagnetic energy that's involved? That's really a job for physicists.

BF: At least they're acquainted with hermeneutics and metaphor. (laughs)

DY: Well, I guess when you get into subatomic particle theory that's probably true. But our anthropological task is not to do that sort of thing, that's almost like the "fundamentalism" I was talking about. People who want to see that energy on a photographic plate or something, adopt an almost fundamentalist attitude. It would be interesting, but I think our job as anthropologists is not quite that literal. Not explain, but to be able to model this in such a way that these experiences would make sense.

BF: Yeah, the main problem with this "fundamentalist" model seems to be that it leaves human experience out of the equation completely at every level.

DY: Sure, the physicist might be able to catch an energy shape on a film, but he wouldn't be able to handle what we're trying to do, which is describe the anthropomorphizing process. The anthropolgist is the best equipped to do that, to look at why we need to anthropomorphize external reality so we can understand it. And of course, as we anthropomorphize it, it's not external reality anymore, is it? Not strictly speaking anyway. It's not objective external reality; it's now the product of our interaction with our environment. It's a new reality. And that new reality is something I think we can talk about to some extent.

BF: Even if you can't physically document it?

DY: Yes, as anthropologists we're not trained to do that. Even if it could be documented physically, that would miss a lot of the point. Which is, how do humans process information and attempt to understand our universe?

BF: I'd like to tie that in with your qi-gong experiences. In the January/February 1990 issue of **New Age Journal**, Philip Lansky says that much of the evidence for qi-gong is "clinical or anecdotal and thus explainable with hypnosis arguments." How would you respond to that?

DY: I don't know. I think most of my experience with qi-gong, and what I've seen in China, would also be anecdotal. I saw paralyzed patients whose limbs were being manipulated at a distance by qi-gong masters standing behind them. The patients couldn't see them. But the qi-gong master would orchestrate with his hands the movement of their limbs. It was a type of physical therapy.

BF: Where was this?

DY: This was in Beijing at a conference on natural medicine. I also went up on the stage with some other people, and the qi-gong master orchestrated our movements as well. There didn't seem to be any control over the movements of the arms.

Some of the stories we've run into have a common theme, more than one person will share an experience

BF: So you felt a loss of control of your own limbs?

DY: Uh huh. But I wouldn't say a loss of control, because I was willingly subjecting myself to it. I was letting my arms do what they wanted to do. Later, people told me that the limbs and arms of the people up on stage, myself included, were following the motions dictated by the motions of the qi-gong master. He was standing behind us, so I don't think it can be explained by suggestion. At least not the normal type of suggestion. For example, if we had seen what the qi-gong master was doing, then I think it would be possible to explain it as suggestion. Some people claimed that it was mental telepathy of some sort, but for most scientists that's just as hard to accept as the transmission of energy, which is the Chinese explanation of it. They maintain that energy is actually transmitted which controls the muscles. Now I've heard anecdotes from supposedly reliable sources that the qi-gong masters can change molecular structure.

BF: Their own?

DY: No, the molecular structure of iron bars or water. A very close friend of mine here in town, a very reputable person, told me that he has seen a qi-gong master alter the molecular structure of iron bars so a person can bend them like a noodle. And I talked to an atomic physicist who saw a qi-gong master direct his energy at a ceramic cup and then eat half of it. So he took the rest of the cup back to his laboratory and analyzed it, and he claimed that the molecular structure had indeed been changed. But again, these are anecdotes and there's a lot of stories like this. The only thing that I've seen first-hand is the physical therapy. No, I should say two things. I had one other first-hand experience when in Beijing. Like so often happens in China, I got sick, and it got worse as the days went on. It was a fairly long conference, and I was in bed most of the time. But I had to give my paper and I didn't know if I was going to be able to. I was taking western-style medicine and it wasn't helping much. I showed up at the auditorium that day, but I didn't think I could make it through a twenty-minute paper presentation without going to the bathroom. (laughs) Fortunately there was a qi-gong master there. He said, "Come on over, I'll see if I can fix you up."

BF: Did he notice that you'd turned green?

DY: No, I mentioned my problem to somebody and this person knew the qi-gong master. So he said, "Let me introduce you to my friend. Maybe he can help you." So we sat at the back of the auditorium and the qi-gong master concentrated and meditated for a few minutes. Qi-gong really comes out of Taoism; it's a Taoist technique appparently. So then he used his thumb to point at a spot on top of my hand between my thumb and forefinger, near where they meet. This is a traditional acupuncture point for handling stomach problems. He didn't touch me, but he said it would act like an acupuncture needle. He directed energy into that acupunture point on both hands, then he had me place my hands over my abdomen while he did the same thing. He concentrated on transferring energy from himself to me to adjust certain things. After about ten minutes of this treatment I felt fine and I went up and gave my paper. That evening they took us all out to a Peking Duck restaurant where the food was quite



Russell Willier preparing to administer a traditional healing method during the psoriasis research project.

greasy. Had there been anything that would have set me off again, I'm sure that would have been it. But it never came back for the rest of my trip to China. So I've had those two experiences with qi-gong. But I think the more dramatic cases, involving change in molecular structure, would have to be very carefully documented.

And there are other anecdotes, for example, a medical doctor and a group of people travelled to China to see a demonstration. Supposedly a qi-gong master can light flourescent bulbs that aren't plugged in. For such things they have to meditate first and build up energy before they can transmit it.

BF: How does this energy leave the body?

DY: Through the fingertips. In China, they have institutes set up to study qi-gong scientifically, and I saw infrared videos. When the qi-gong masters meditate you can see a buildup of heat in the brain and the fingertips. They show that change over time, over a five or ten minute period. Then it's transmitted from the fingertips, supposedly up to about thirty feet.

BF: The heat energy?

DY: Or the electromagnetic energy or whatever it is. I'm not really equipped to talk about it scientifically, but the Chinese are attempting to study it. Now that relates back to what we were talking about earlier. If you have the equipment and the know-how to try and measure these various forms of energy, then I think it's interesting and probably worthwhile doing. To give you another illustration of the difference in approach; there's a psychic here in Edmonton who asked me to document her abilities. What she first had in mind was that I would haul in lots of heavy-duty equipment. We thought about that, but we don't know enough about it. So we called in a couple of psychologists to help us, and they were thinking about using an electroencephalogram. However, they decided that that probably wouldn't do the trick either, because it only measures the brain's surface activity. So we eventually ended up with a very simple technique involving a medical doctor here in town. We'll have the psychic sit on one side of a screen running down the middle of a table. Patients will then come in with their documented medical records, and sit on the other side of the screen. She claims to be able to do an internal diagnosis, so we'll videotape the whole thing to have a good record of it.

BF: Does she claim to see inside the person's body, or to be able to determine what the patient knows about their own disease?

DY: No, she claims to be able to actually go into the patient's body and check out the bones, blood, organs, and so forth, to see what the problems are. She's willing to do this, so we'll see what happens. But in this case you don't have a direct measurement. It's not what I refer to as a "fundamentalistic" explanation. If she's successful, we still don't know what kind of energy is involved. But it could be a pretty convincing demonstration that something is happening.

BF: All you have to do is point out an unknown phenomenon at work that merits further study.

DY: Yes. So that's more consistent with the anthropological approach because it's not intrusive. We're simply documenting as accurately as possible. That's the advantage of videotape, it provides a good record. We try to document what happens, and then as the technology comes along some time in the future, the so-called "hardcore" scientific explanations may emerge.

BF: A phenomenon has been documented in sub-atomic physics; experimenters may alter the outcome of their experiments by having strong preconceptions regarding the outcome. Do you think this effect may influence the experiments you engage in?

DY: Well yeah. It can work both ways though. On the negative side of it, I think that your preconceptions may severely skew the data that you're getting and falsify the picture, which would be a negative type of bias. On the other hand, if you read reports of the great scientific discoveries, almost all of the great scientists claim that that's really the way science works. You have an intuitive insight, and then you set about to demonstrate and hopefully prove it. So the theory or insight often comes first. I think a lot of scholarship is that way too. You have an intuitive insight and you see a pattern or relationship. Who cares if it comes in a dream, a vision, or in the bathtub? It doesn't really make any difference. Then you set about doing the scholarship, or the experiments or whatever's necessary to give it credibility. I don't necessarily see that as bad because scientific method will not lead to meaningful insights in itself. Science is basically a way of collecting systematic data. But finding the pattern, even if the data has been collected with equipment that is not subjective, involves the application of the human mind.

BF: So the scientific method won't provide models?

DY: It doesn't generate models automatically, it's still a result of intuitive insight. To me, whether the intuitive insight comes first or later doesn't make a lot of difference. But your positivists probably wouldn't be too happy about that. (laughs)

BF: When Russell Willier speaks of "the way things are moving," what signs is he looking for? Does he look for specific patterns? There appears to be a cause and effect system that he recognizes will provide a reproducable result if a ritual is performed

correctly.

DY: Yeah, but you want to be careful not to confuse that with traditional anthropological definitions of magic, because it's not an automatic cause and effect relationship. Doing the ritual doesn't split the cloud, and that's a major difference.

BF: So the ritual is to alert the spirit helpers to his desire for help to split the cloud?

DY: Yes, and it's up to them as to whether they want to do it or not, depending on how sincere the shaman is, the past history of his relationship with the spirit helpers and so forth. It's strictly up to them, you can't force a spirit helper to do anything. In a strict definition of magic, the ritual is efficaceous as long as you perform it correctly. Most of what I've seen of Native religion is not that way. It's not really magic, it's a practical religion and the Gods are not unseen. They're not as transcendent as Christianity. The Great Spirit is transcendent, but the spiritual power that we have contact with is very much a part of the natural world, the Grandfathers are simply the basic processes and elements of nature. They were there at the beginning of the universe and are all around us now. Their system is a matter of fitting into nature and preparing oneself to encounter these forces in a personal way. This anthropomorphizing process is something that Russell himself recognizes. He says that when the spirit of a plant appears to him in a vision, it may appear as a human. I asked if he sees the whole human, he said "No, you don't have to see the whole human, all you need to see is the top part because that's what the spirit needs to talk to you." This is a very sophisticated awareness that these natural forces are not really human, but do appear in human form if you've done your meditating, praying, fasting and so on. You enter a spiritual condition where you go on the same plane as the spiritual forces and you interact with them.

BF: Are they viewed as independent conscious entities who move about doing things when not actually interacting with the shaman?

DY: The basic forces of nature are operating all the time. The north wind is always busy, gravity is always at work. They're doing their natural thing. When you intervene to seek out and tap in on the power; to seek the assistance of the elemental forces, those forces can be put to human use but not in a magical automatic way. You have to have the right kind of relationship with the forces before they can



be used the way that you want them to be. You can even use them for bad purposes, but that eventually catches up with you.

BF: Is the distinction between good medicine and bad medicine based on an ethical norm within the society?

DY: No, I wouldn't say that. This is a part I don't really understand too well, I'm not even sure it's clear and consistent in Russell's mind. Ultimately all power comes from the Great Spirit so it's not dualistic in an ultimate sense. But in a practical sense, there is good and evil in the world. That evil is the result of humans using more or less neutral powers in bad ways. Russell says that's where a lot of it starts, which indicates that evil power, once it is formulated in an evil fashion, does have a life on its own. Again the aesthetic analogy is relevant, once you create a work of art it has a life of its own and the power to change people.

BF: It's a cultural icon or a meme.

DY: Yeah, it becomes a new reality. And so in a way, evil powers are there. There's a good north wind and a bad north wind. But if you call on the bad wind to help with bad medicine to send curses or that sort of thing, you immediately lose your ability to heal. It's not something that a good medicine man would want to mess around with.

Getting back to your basic question: this business of seeing pattern in everything is what some people in the western world have called synchronicity. It's not so much a cause and effect relationship as the fact that everything that happens is related to everything else. Everything is interconnected in some way, of course that's a major theme of Eastern mysticism and the Native person would share that belief. If everything is connected with everything else, then seeing pattern is just a recognition of that fact. It's not that you do something in one place that causes something to happen half-way around the world. Rather, what happens at this place is connected with things that happen half-way around the world anyway. The person who is perceptive and sensitive to these things will see that connection and see the pattern, which is important. If you see the interconnectedness of all things, you can make use of the information for your own benefit. If you don't see them you're missing out on information which you should have to help in making decisions.

BF: Yes, if I run across an author's name a number of times in unlikely places in a

short time, I assume that's what I should read next.

DY: It's an interesting question. I think that if you see those things over and over again and you start to see a pattern, then that may be a legitimate way to use synchronicity. It probably means that you are in need of certain types of information to make a decision. You start to sort out, or to be selectively attentive to those things in the environment that you need. But, it can be used in a very superstitious way as well. For example, people will flip open the **Bible** and the first passage that their eyes rest upon tells them what to do. That's not a matter of seeing pattern, it's a very magical thing. Synchronicity used in that way isn't what people like Carl Jung had in mind, and it certainly wouldn't be compatible with what the Native shaman has in mind either.

BF: A better example just occurred to me. Immediately after arranging this interview I picked up the **New Age Journal** for the first time in my life, as I have very little interest in that type of magazine, and stumbled across the feature on qi-gong healing therapy. The timing was perfect.

DY: When that sort of thing happens I think some people have the mistaken belief that there are forces out there directing their lives in a personal way and causing things to happen. The mistake in adopting that point of view is that the person becomes very egocentric. You become a centre, a focus for all the forces in the universe.

BF: It's then simply solipsism.

DY: It doesn't take long to figure out that if all those forces are working in your behalf, then what's it doing to all the other people? If doing something good for you does something bad to others, then it's not going to be very satisfying. Who would want to live in that kind of universe? So I don't think that synchronicity has anything to do with spirits, deities, gods or forces out there that make things happen in order to direct your life. I really think that it's being subconsciously aware of subtle messages constantly coming to you from the universe, and then being able to react to those messages in light of what you're doing or what you need at the time. So when you picked up the **New Age Journal** some sort of information was coming to you, saying that there might be something useful in light of who you're going to talk to. It's a form of intuition, but I don't think intuition is an infallible guide, just another level of information processing. The way we process information can always be in error, so you don't want to treat information uncritically. On the other hand, it's wise to treat it as an additional information source and be open to what your intuition tells you.

BF: Quite often it's all we have to go on.

DY: (Laughing) Yeah that's right.

BF: That's true on a global scale now. In the "Information Age" the person who has access to the most information is aware of the most possibilities. And if you open yourself to possibilities that may or may not be correct, logical or rational, then you are at least open to the paths they present. You can then critically analyze these additional possibilites and choose from a greater number of available options.

DY: Yes that's right, and that's the essence of human freedom isn't it? It's not freedom in some ultimate sense, because that would mean that you are doing something totally unconnected with any determining forces, and that obviously doesn't exist. Freedom means having more than one option open to you at any one time. Freedom is the ability to exercise choice and, as you point out very well; the basis of having options open to you is being aware that there usually is more than one option. But people simply aren't aware of them.

BF: And that's the root of my fascination with the Native belief system, it opens more possibilities. Sadly, some people can't deal with it at all.

DY: They close off that option.

BF: I see it as a sliding scale; at one end are the people who close themselves to any possibility, the other end consists of those who readily, and uncritically, accept everything. A "happy medium" must lie somewhere in the middle, people who are open to bizarre ideas, yet retain a critical sense. For example, I'm willing to entertain the idea that Willier can split rainclouds with the assistance of an anthropomorphized energy in the form of a spirit helper. (laughs)

DY: Well I don't know about that, but it's interesting to note that religions around the world usually have practitioners who control the weather. They claim there's nothing very difficult or mysterious about it. So it may just be a technology that we're unfamiliar with. I think the best thing in a case like that is to say, "It may be possible." That's a type of... agnosticism may be too strong a word, but to say, "Maybe they'll discover a mechanism someday, but in the meantime, this is what I saw." (laughs) I think the basic issue that we're talking about is that there are two aspects to science. One side of the coin is intuitive insight concerning the basic patterning in the universe, and that's where models come from. The other side is the systematic collection of data.

BF: And they work together.

DY: Yes, in a parallel fashion. One doesn't generate the other automatically. If we think of science in that way, the kind of things that we're talking about fall into the realm of science. I wouldn't consider my work, the kinds of investigations and research that I do, as theological investigations or something like that. It's a scientific investigation. It's what I feel is the more meaningful definition of science. It's probably the one that scientists who are out on the leading edges of their fields would say, "Yeah that's what science is. It's not technology and how much hardware you have."

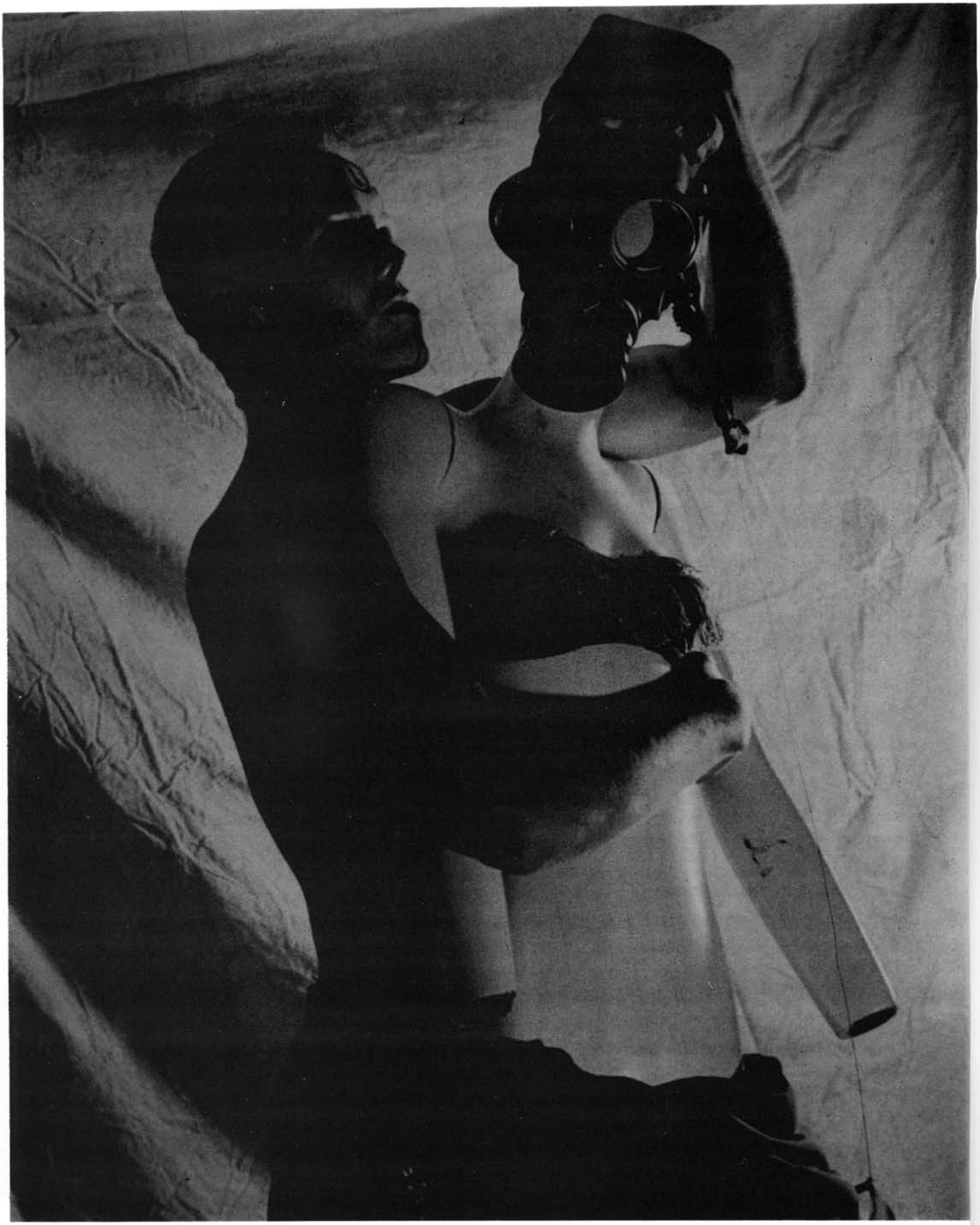
BF: I thank you for your time Dr. Young.

DY: You're very welcome.

CARPENTER SUFFERS ONLY SPLITTING HEADACHE AFTER CO-WORKER NAILS BASEBALL CAP ON HEAD

A Duluth Minn. carpenter had a hard time getting his hat off Monday. But then it had been nailed to his head with a nail gun. "I've had worse headaches," said Lance Grangruth, who said the headache was the only complication he suffered after the nail went four centimetres into his forehead. "I didn't actually feel it go in," he said. "I heard the gun go off. I tried to take my hat off and it wouldn't come off."

Dr. William Himango said he used pliers on Monday to remove the five-centimetre nail from the frontal lobe of Grangruth's brain. "If he were to pick a place to put a nail in, he picked exactly the right one," Himango said. The same injury to other parts of the brain could have killed Grangruth or seriously impaired him. Grangruth was working on a garage when a co-worker, perched on a ladder, lowered his arm while holding the gun's trigger, police said. The co-worker didn't realize Grangruth was standing below. The gun touched his head and went off, driving the nail through his baseball cap and into his forehead.



Indian Summer

by Mark Nixon

Awake.

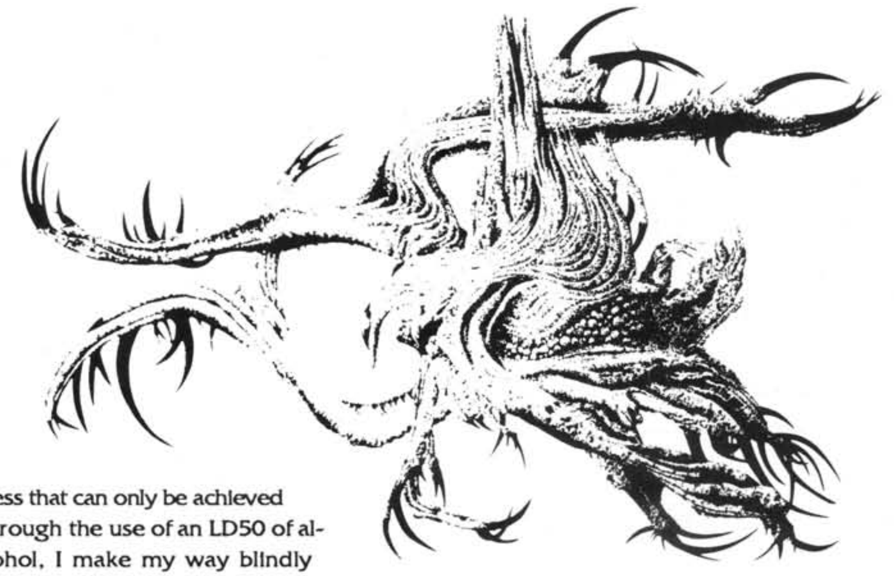
The first phase is always denial; I can't be awake because I can't see anything, therefore I am asleep, therefore I am having a nightmare. A bad dream involving some sort of horrible brain surgery without anaesthesia. That tends to explain everything. I am dreaming that some mad scientist has drilled a hole just above, and a little to the left, of my right temple, and for some unfathomable reason is forcing air into my brain by means of a rubber tube inserted into this hole, causing my brain to bubble and make rude noises, the same way a milkshake reacts when you blow air into it with a straw.

I can make it stop. All I have to do is wake up. All I have to do to wake up is open my eyes. I will open my eyes and I will wake up. I will open my eyes and...

There is a flash. A searing pain rips through bone and sinew, through vitals and viscera that finally settled in my stomach and resolves itself in that basic involuntary reaction: vomit. Over shirt and sheets, pillow and pants, a single purging wave of foul poison is aimed at a bedside bucket only as an afterthought. A bitter acrid taste fights for dominance in my mouth after too many cigarettes, and a thick coating of fuzzy fur that has grown on my tongue and teeth overnight.

The sun is up. It is morning.

The second phase is also denial. I deny the fact that the alarm is ringing? buzzing/drilling into my racial subconscious filling me up with primordial dread of a day at work. I find it hard to comprehend how a civilization so advanced it puts radioactive garbage in space, pollutes oceans too deep to explore, and renders a planet's atmosphere unbreathable, but can't function with one less person filling the rank and file of some meaningless service industry job for one day. Yet I have been assured that my presence is required, indeed vital, to the *status quo* and that failure to attend to the day's duties could result in dire consequences. So with the noose of debt-paycheque-credit tightening around my neck, and with the keen somatic awareness that can only be achieved through the use of an LD50 of alcohol, I make my way blindly through the morning's ablutions.



It is morning. I am late.

Too far gone for vows of abstinence, the final phase of this particular form of crisis management is first aid. Re-hydration, though usually more effective before passing out, is given priority. Several glasses of water later, the next consideration is nourishment. Owing to the rather delicate condition of my stomach I decide to forego breakfast at McDonald's in favour of a handful of vitamins and another glass of water. (Yes, I know Dr. Mindell says that vitamins are useless without food, but I still find the placebo effect comforting.) Finally, a couple of caffeine/efedrine tablets to replace the sleep forsaken in the name of alcohol poisoning, two non-prescription painkillers, a muscle relaxant with codeine, and the Florinal left over from dental surgery last spring that I have been saving for just such a special occasion. Combine ingredients. Let stand five minutes.

I am late. The bus is late.

Few things are capable of making one as mystically observant as a real hangover. Oh, the purists will argue in favour of New-Age yoga, philosophy, and even various recreational drugs, but it is my contention that one is never so absolutely and truly aware of one's surroundings until they are amplified, unified, and focussed into a finely tuned, concentrated unpleasantness that only a set of hungover senses can present. (To those of you who either due to constitution, religion, or common sense, have never experienced the world in such a way I am at a loss. It would be like trying to describe purple to the blind, LSD to Tipper Gore, or **Doonesbury** to George Bush.) Let it suffice to say that when truly hungover, it is easier and more fun to pull your own head off, than breathe.

So it came as an almost pleasant surprise, that is, if anything could be pleasant under such conditions, that the morning was unusually quiet. No yelling children, no yapping dogs, not even any traffic on my residential street. Only the distant cawing of an amused crow in one of the barren trees on this warm October morning.

I was almost relieved to see someone standing at the bus stop. That is until I found myself accosted by a diminutive, pimply young fellow with greasy hair, a large briefcase and even stranger fashion sense than my own. He immediately flashed me a look of recognition, and in a loud nasal voice told me that he knew me, and what's more, was convinced that I must know him.

"Why are you famous?"

"No," he shrugged as if he hadn't quite placed me, "You're a Dreamquester. Right?"

"Not beyond any casual metaphysical sense. I have known a couple of them, but not well, and not recently. So if you'll excuse..."

"Oh, then you must have met me at CONvention 23 last year, you know, the Science Fiction Convention. Don't you remember me? I won a prize for best **Star Trek: The Next Generation** costume. I went as the Crusher Boy, except I used lots of makeup to make it look like I had been in a terrible transporter accident. I put a lot of work into that outfit, want to see the pictures? I've got them right here...," he said reaching into his large battered briefcase that appeared to be filled with Nintendo hint books, and John Norman novels. "Hey! I know where I know you from," he said, pausing in mid-rummage. "You work for that comic shop on the east side of town."

I suddenly stopped twisting my newspaper, which I had been subconsciously rolling tighter and tighter into a club. If he lived, it might get back to my employer, and management frowns on staff coldcocking potential customers. I decided to make nice, and hope his bus was hi-jacked by terrorists. Instead I smiled a carefully calculated smile. One designed to project just enough polite interest to allow me to keep my job, and just enough contempt and malice that the average person would rush home to make sure I hadn't burned down their house, or disemboweled their family pets and written love sonnets to *Ah Pook* on the walls with the blood.

Unfortunately the subtlety of this gesture appeared to be lost on him. He continued to babble to me about something, I'm not exactly sure what, I think his droning cadence caused me to lose consciousness briefly.

When I became aware of his voice again he was nattering about the relative merits of teleportation in the DC and Marvel comic book universes, or something about Ambush Bug and Nightcrawler. His voice made my innards churn and through the muffling of the painkillers, I could feel the solid relentless pounding of a jackhammer on my skull. The stimulants I had taken earlier were now making me acutely aware of my hair, and of how much pain it was in. I had begun to sweat profusely, and was sure I was going to be ill again, but I just closed my eyes and made little involuntary grunting noises. These were immediately misinterpreted as sounds of interest.

"...and I still think Batman should have been tougher, don't you? I've seen it eight times, and I'm going to buy the video just as soon as I get a VCR, but I really think they should use the Penguin in the next movie because I really think they could do something really special with that character. I bet the next turtle movie is going to be really dumb. I don't see why they couldn't have used the stories from the original comic books. I sold mine a long time ago, made a lot of money too. I figured the market had peaked and it was a good time to start dumping stock. I still bought some of those colour reprints you guys sell so I'd have the stories..."

I looked the fellow in the eye, tried to make some lame excuse to leave, but he seemed to have me cornered in the bus shelter, and there was no way short of knocking him down to get past this fellow and his big briefcase. I wanted to scream, or throw up, or shoot myself. Anything to get away from this person's incessant talking, and get on with some serious self-pity and personal agony. but my mouth had seized up, and all I could manage was a vague hand gesture and an insightful grunt of agreement on some frighteningly dull and obscure comment about Gerry Anderson's film making style, and a disembodied, "Oh, yes...," when asked about whether or not I had ever seen a particular episode of some obscure SF TV show I'd never heard of, and if I could remember who had written and directed it. I pondered the odds of this fellow spontaneously combusting in the next minute or so. Unfortunately the numbers seemed to be largely and un-satisfyingly against such an event. At least he wasn't talking about hockey.



"...I couldn't imagine life without my computer. Even if I don't upgrade the memory for another year, it can still handle 95% of the software I want to run, and there really isn't that much on the BBS's worth pirating these days, especially with all the viruses going around. But I keep a really good backup, and I think I'm really up-to-date with my anti-viral programmes. I have them set up as an automatic sub-routine, but that's still no replacement for..."

There must be some way to escape. I'm still late, I can slip away on the pretext of... "Look, ah, excuse me for interrupting you, but I'm a bit late for work, and the bus seems way behind, so if you'll just excuse me, I'd better just get over to that phone booth and call in, just to let the boss know I haven't died."

Suddenly he shut up. His expression changed. His idiot deadpan shifted into a broad sardonic grin. His eyes widened, and as they widened the sunlight seemed to change. It was as if a cloud were passing in front of the sun, only the shadow sweeping up the street was impossibly dark. It swallowed the scene as it passed. The road, the sidewalk. Even the houses were disappearing.

The little man's demeanour was now one of psychotic glee. "Well, don't let me keep you. I wouldn't want to bore you with the details of my pitiful life now, would I? No way." The darkness was close now. Only the interior of the shelter remained lit. The blackness surrounded the plexiglass walls like a thick curtain. He giggled, stepped back into the strange veil and was gone.

The sun shone again with its usual October half-heartedness. My head reeled with the squishy pain of dehydration and fear. I tried to stagger from the shelter to the payphone up the street. I was intercepted by a large fleshy man in a dirty team jacket, and an even dirtier baseball hat. He would not let me pass.

"Hold up there son, you've got lots of time before the bus gets here. Nice weather, huh? Just another Indian Summer day in hell, eh? Now, how 'bout them **Flames**...."

POEMS

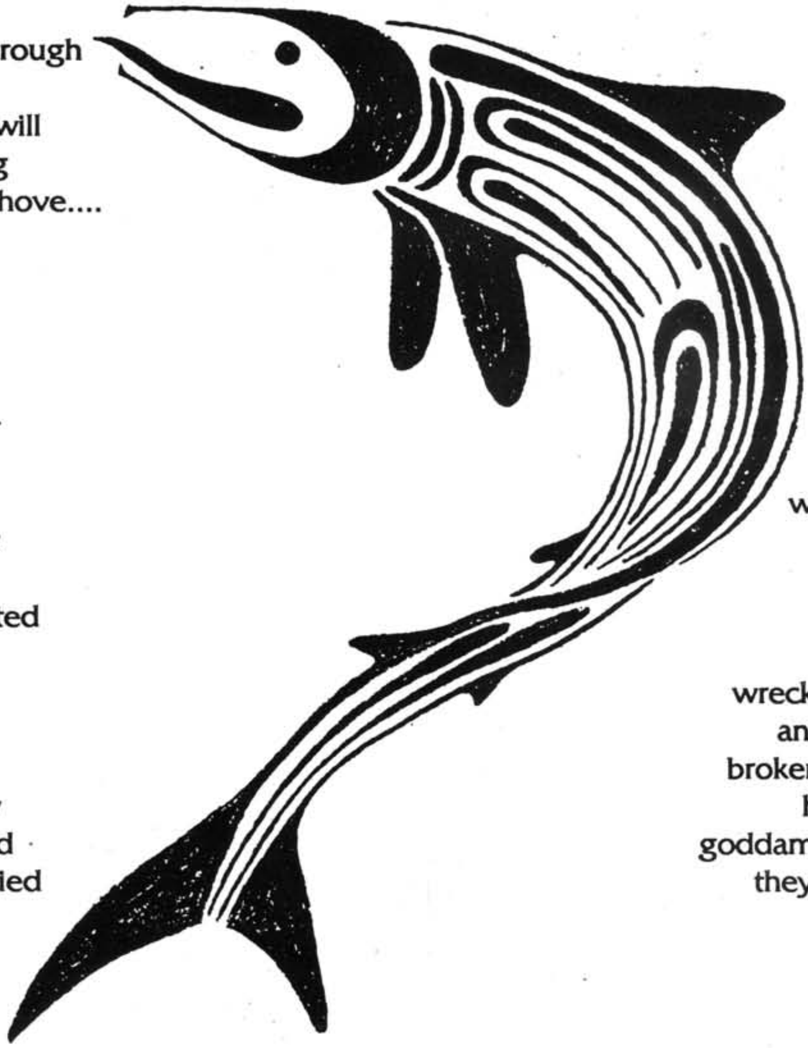
By OBERC

Could
by Oberc

Put a rope
around my neck
then kick me
in the balls
but I'm not
dropping through
that hole
on my free will
you're going
to have to shove....

She
by Oberc

Tells me her
uncle used
to sneak in
late at night
telling her
he just wanted
a sniff
it always
moved on
from that
and nobody
ever listened
when she tried
too hard
to explain
they told
her she
was dreaming
that this
was just
a nightmare
scheme....



Its
by Oberc

Instinct
I guess
to ask
if it
is mine
to ask
these kind
of questions
as tears
roll down
her face....

Don't
by Oberc

Ever tell me
what is wrong
I don't want
to know I
see blood
left from car
wrecks and bullets
and knives and
broken bottles and
hear so many
goddamned screams
they may as well
be sirens....

How to discover the obscure worlds of Global Fringe Subcultures from your favourite couch

By Bruce Fletcher

The World is an amazing place. There's absolutely no reason to ever be bored as long as you cultivate and maintain a healthy interest in Other People's Belief Systems (OPBS). Now, it isn't necessary for you to **really** believe OPBS, but it makes it a heck of a lot more enjoyable if you do (at least at the time that you're exposed to them). **You** can experience the thrill of discovering a perpetual motion machine, **you** can tap into the aetheric grid of the ascended masters to help transform the world, **you** can discover innumerable varieties of heaven and hell, you **know** the UFO people are here so find out what they're doing. Discover bizarre sexual practices that could put you in an intensive care ward if you do them (are you familiar with 'gerbilling'?), or if you're so inclined **you** can hate men, women, children, Jews, gays, blacks, W.A.S.P.s, or any other arbitrary segment of the human population. **You** can find inner peace, or conversely explore the darkest pits of nihilism. The best part of it all is that you don't actually have to meet these people, you can explore OPBS by mail! And maybe, just maybe, you'll discover that some of these weird religious, scientific, and political systems are **true** in some sense. Now **that** is a truly unsettling experience, let me tell you.

Now if you have the burning desire to delve into this twilit world of manias (and since you're reading this you probably do), you'll need a few good contacts and entry points so you'll have a place to start. All of the sources I'm going to mention should be in your library, since this is such a strange, quickly evolving section of our culture it's simply too large for any one source to cover. The first place to start is the local supermarket. Buy **The Weekly World News** every week for three months to train with. Read the thing, all the way through, and try to believe everything you read therein. It's a truly liberating experience (if that's too easy, try something really stimulating like **Reader's Digest**. Just try to believe **everything** in one of those!). One must always remember how powerful these ubiquitous tabloids are.



Gargoyles
by Donald David © 1990

They are the ultimate Cut-Up. McLuhanesque memes comprised of jagged bits of fact interstrewn and juxtaposed with choice urban legends, or urban-legends-to-be, consumed by most people in the cultural context of a bored line-up while one waits to receive the necessities of human survival. Primal hypnotherapy. Who owns these things anyway? They create the world. Quite apart from their place as the lowest common denominator info-feed for normal people, they make a really nice inclusive metaphor for every other cultural medium, plus they hit us right in the subconscious in a very direct manner. Did anyone see **They Live**? Is this the work of the evil grey aliens? Communists or fascists weakening our collective mind so they can transform us into slugs waited to be trampled by our rightful masters?, and are all those personal ads in the back a communication link for foreign agents and Satanist networks? But I digress. You want other stuff right? Really weird stuff like **Baby Trank Trank** dolls and **Taint**. Look no further!

First and foremost on your list should be **Factsheet Five**, (but you're all familiar with **FF** aren't you). Well, if not, let me just say that it's the Bible of the underground. Mike Gunderloy, the obsessive mind behind it all, reviews everything that comes his way (even oil paintings on occasion) and his thumbnail sketches give a pretty good idea of where each particular 'zine is coming from. Order **Factsheet Five** from Mike at: 6 Arizona Ave., Rensselaer, N.Y., 12144-4502. It'll cost you $3.00 U.S. for one issue.

The next best thing is a SubGenius book by Rev. Ivan Stang called **High Weirdness By Mail** (1988, New York, Simon & Shuster Inc., 336 pp.) It's subtitled **A Directory of The Fringe: Mad Prophets, Crackpots, Kooks & True Visionaries**, and that's exactly what it is. The only problem is that Kooks move around a lot and so many of the addresses aren't up to date. But if you know something exists, you can always track it down. The book is divided into chapters full of brief reviews and addresses.

Chapter titles include: *Weird Science* (my personal favourite), *Rantzines, Weird Politics, More Weird Religion, Cosmic Hippie Drug-Brother Stuff, Great Badfilm and Sleaze, Respectable Weird Publications*, and much more.

In a similar vein, but more up to date is **The Fringes of Reason: A Whole Earth Catalog** (edited by Ted Schultz, 1989, New York, Harmony Books, 224 pp.)The subtitle on this one is also very descriptive: **A Field Guide to New Age Frontiers, Unusual Beliefs & Eccentric Sciences.** The primary difference between this book and **High Weirdness** is that the latter is a SubGenius book, and so it is as inherently wacked-out as many of the groups that Stang writes about. Whereas **The Fringes** comes from the more objective and respectable **Whole Earth Catalog** tradition, and it includes articles by writers like Jay Kinney (underground comic artist extraordinaire, and editor/publisher of the excellent magazine **Gnosis**), his is called "Backstage with 'Bob' — is the Church of the SubGenius the Ultimate Cult?". And **The Fringes** is more intellectually rigorous, it includes long articles and **Whole Earth**-style book reviews. Alas, this means that quite a few of the smaller groups are missing, but this is probably a good book to start with if you're totally unfamiliar with this kind of pop culture. Even if you have Stang's book this is a very complementary work.

The two greatest catalogs of all time have recently been released. They're both outstanding and focus on substantially different areas: the **AMOK FOURTH DISPATCH** (371 pp. $6.50 U.S., make it out to: AMOK, P.O. Box 861867, Terminal Annex, Los Angeles, CA 90086-1867, U.S.A.), and the **LOOMPANICS UNLIMITED 1990 MAIN CATALOG** (230 pp. $3.00 U.S., make it out to: Loompanics Unlimited, P.O. Box 1197, Port Townsend, WA 98368, U.S.A.). If weird books are what you want and you live in some godawful backwater prairie town and they don't even have a **Coles**, then write for these immediately. You'll be astounded at what's available. **Loompanics** highlights the "how-to" books while **AMOK** has a better selection of depraved art and general repulsiveness. Between the two of them you can do most anything you want to. **AMOK** will supply the source material for the Strategy and Tactics involved in your plan to mutate civilization with viral biologics and complete media terrorism, then pick up the **Loompanics Catalog** and learn how to manufacture poisons and weaponry, create Canadian false ID, torture and kill effectively as you strive to replace the old order with your personal vision — using the money from your clandestine drug laboratory, the armed robberies and B&E's, and the counterfeiting operation in the bomb shelter in the woods behind your farm. This is fun for the whole family! I pick these up and read them for hours at a time. One thing you should know, many of these books aren't supposed to be in our country. I quote **Loompanics**:

> Loompanics Unlimited cannot be responsible for any shipments of books seized by any governmental body. This applies in particular to Canada, where many books are banned, and to prisoners, whose keepers often confiscate books. If you are a prisoner or a Canadian, you are advised to check with your authorities before ordering books.

This, admittedly, causes a slight problem, but we must always remember the cardinal rule of the info-culture.

If you know it exists and you want it badly enough, you'll always be able to find it.

SOVIET PSYCHIC'S ATTEMPT TO STOP TRAIN REVEALS SEVERE LIMITATION OF HIS POWERS

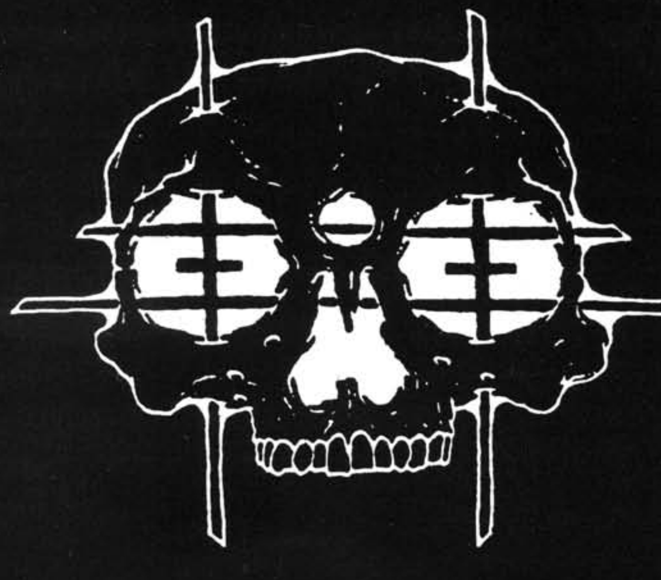
MOSCOW (AP)- E. Frenkel, one of the Soviet union's growing number of psychic healers and mentalists, said he used his power to stop bicycles, automobiles and streetcars. He believed he was ready for something bigger, so he stepped in front of a freight train.

It did not work.

The engineer of the train that killed Mr. Frenkel said the psychic stepped onto the tracks with his arms raised, his head lowered and his body tensed. The daily **Sovietskaya Rossiya** said that investigators looking into the psychic's decision to jump in front of a train near the southern city of Astrakhan found the answer in the briefcase he left by the side of the track. "First I stopped bicycles, cars and a streetcar," Mr. Frenkel wrote in notes found by investigators. "Now, I'm going to stop a train."

Mr. Frenkel apparently believed he had found the secret of psychic-biological power and that his effort to halt a train would be the ultimate test of his powers, according to the notes. "Only in extraordinary conditions of a direct threat to my organism will all my reserves be called into action," he wrote.

In the past few months, the Soviet Union has become awash with mentalists and self-proclaimed psychics who are appearing on state-run televison, drawing huge crowds and receiving thousands of letters requesting help. Mr. Frenkel had been proclaimed by local television in Astrakhan, a city at the mouth of the Volga River nearly 1,300 kilometres southeast of Moscow, as a healer who had helped some people, the newspaper's report said. The engineer of the train saw Mr. Frenkel walking along the railroad from a long distance. But only at the last minute did the mentalist step onto the tracks. "Emergency braking didn't help, a tragedy occurred," the newspaper said. It did not say which day Mr. Frenkel was killed.



One fine spring day I said to myself, "I wonder what it is that *"Thee Temple ov Psychick Youth U.S.* are doing?" so I wrote to them and asked.

By Eric Fletcher

TOPY is an ongoing magickal organization/process devoted to a personalized form of spirituality and the development of usually ignored (unknown-unconscious) faculties of the human being. They profess to be concerned with total honesty, hard work [see "Thee Hacker's Ethick" elsewhere in this issue], and a dedication to individualized ritual, which allows them to attain states of consciousness that they can imprint and meta-program. They apply Brion Gysin's Cut-Up method to magick, philosophy, and religion and are currently formulating a unique brand of modern western magickal practice. Their philosophy is pragmatic and is very firmly grounded in the realities of the 1990's; that is, our media-generated, shifting cultural-reality paradigms, the latest developments in quantum physics, American Indian shamanism, chaos theory, and individual freedom. This type of organization is unique, to my knowledge, and eminently suited for the end of the millenium in the global village.

The TOPY network is also dedicated to total access to information using every tool at their disposal, for they continue the frontline assault of the information war first declared by the legendary band **Throbbing Gristle**. Genesis P-Orridge, the former frontman for **TG** then formed the band **Psychic TV**, which is essentially the propaganda wing of the TOPY global network. This mutant strain of chaotic quasi-cyberpunk, quasi-Thelemic magickians also have a Canadian access point: **TOPYCAN**, Box 579, Station P, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 2T1.

This interview was conducted by mail earlier this year with Coyote 12, based at TOPYUS headquarters in Denver. The questions were mailed out, and three cassettes came back filled with the following interview (and much more as well, like belching, music, laughing, and little completely unintelligible bits). It's a really great ambient party tape, it sounds like someone's having fun somewhere. Also present in Denver for the taping were Coyote 25 (from Chicago), and Coyote 105 (from St. Louis), therefore it's possible to get a sense of both the diversity and the correlations of the philosophies of practicing United Statesian TOPY members. What follows is a chopped-up, stripped-down trip deep into the heart of the Temple of Psychick Youth U.S.

ERIC FLETCHER: Is the Temple of Psychick Youth considered a religion by the U.S. government?

COYOTE 12: No we're all too lazy to keep books.

EF: In Charles Neal's book, **Tape Delay**, Genesis P-Orridge mentions mail being opened illegally by customs officials, and raids by Scotland Yard on the TOPY offices in London. Have you had any problems with the police?

12: So far we haven't had any encounters with the police at all, although we're apparently getting negative press from some quarters. There's a book called **The Satan Hunter** by Tom Wedge that has a lot of information, or misinformation, in it. It claims that our "shocking video material" is made to make people feel less squeamish about mass murder, that we're inuring people to violence as well as priming and prepping them up for ritual murder in the future, which I would say is a bit scurrilous. We had one discussion with the police. We made the mistake of taking some sensitive photos into a lab, which were then handed over to the police. They weren't piercings, just ritual bondage. They raided a person's house, and went to my mother's house looking for me and so on. I went down there and they realized that whatever had taken place in the pictures was done with the free will of the individual concerned. Therefore, they just wanted to talk to us about it. They were pretty ignorant, but quite nice. I had a nice talk with them, and ended up talking about Nazis, they were quite well informed about it, especially the New Right. It turned out to be an interesting conversation. They sort of said, "Now we know where to go if we find some body in an alley with a Psychick Cross carved into his belly or something." In a way I think that's good, because we need to be accountable for what we say.

EF: How effective is international communication between TOPY stations, considering mail to and from Europe is being tampered with?

12: We get letters all the time that are taped shut and stuff like that. I think it's ridiculous. If a government wants to read a letter, they can use an X-ray machine and not even open it. And everything that I write that comes out of this office is basically public domain. We need to be accountable for everything we put out; by assuming that everything is being read by various people, it keeps you from making frivolous or flippant remarks which can be misinterpreted. One should always assume that everything one is doing is being monitored in some form, because it is. This particular conversation is on a physical tape, any conversation with another person is in their memory and yours. New physics might imply that it's in the memory of the bricks of the building or whatever. And if there are entities that don't have the specific allocation of time and space that we do, then they're able to monitor various things. I'd be a lot more worried about the angels or whatever you want to call them. What can the police



do? We're not doing anything illegal. If they don't have anything better to do than read our mail, then fine I don't mind.

COYOTE 105: What about the U.K.? They've been in a lot of shit with the police, what's the basis for that?

12: Britain is a police state. Canada, to a large degree, is a police state. The great thing about the U.S. is that the police are pretty well connected, and they don't bother us that much. For example, we try to keep TOPY as apolitical as possible, for that reason. Within the U.S. side of the network we try to de-emphasize drug abuse, abuse of liberty, and that sort of behaviour as much as we can. As long as you're not molesting children, or selling or possessing large quantities of drugs, you can pretty much do whatever you want in this country. But I think it's important that TOPY is a credible organization. If we put stuff out on the assumption that it's being read by people that can prosecute us, then it keeps us much more credible and sensible because of the quality of the information that we're putting out. We're not making crass statements and absurd generalizations that could be misinterpreted or quickly superceded. We're trying to get something that's more or less permanent and stay out of the day-by-day fads that large parts of society have fallen into.

EF: Coyote 2 told me you've taken the Coyote and Kali names for "security as well as a sense ov unity." Is that security really necessary? Do you receive a lot of hate mail?

12: Well, as explained in **The Grey Book**, people send things that are of a very personal nature. Hopefully, the numbering system gives people the ability to be a lot more frank. It also gives other people the ability to go through records of people's progress without necessarily having access to their identity, for example psychological reports use pseudonyms or case numbers. It can also give people sort of a sense of gaining a new identity. Giving somebody a new name is a good symbol.

EF: Genesis P-Orridge writes about **Psychic TV**'s 1988 North American tour for the liner notes of ***Live at Thee Pyramid*** and says: "We returned to Britain addicted with thee energy we had found in Amerika. Thee open minds, thee enthusiasm, thee streetwise knowledge, thee powerful visions ov thee land itself." Do you share his vision of America?

12: If you go to Europe, any open space is some sort of nature preserve with little fences along it and little stone walkways, picnic tables, trashcans, and stuff like that. There's really no wilderness in the sense that we know it, even the forests are basically parks. And since there are so few large pieces of uninhabited land, the people just flock there. There wouldn't be anything left if they didn't treat it like a park. I think this distinction is really crucial for most people in the U.S., and Canada too I imagine. [Yes. -ed.] I think the concept of space is a really important part of our identity. Based upon my few trips to the U.K., it seems that we are more apt to have a place of one's own as one of our main de-

sires. Whether it's land, one's own apartment, a car or something else, it's important for people to have space. Whereas in Europe, they tend to think that co-operation is a bigger goal, to start some sort of a cooperative set-up or a communal living situation: alternative sorts of tribal existence in a more structured sense. I really think that this 'wildness', the cowboy-biker-mad mechanic vibe is a central focus here, as exemplified by the Hell's Angels, Buffalo Soldiers, American Indians, or in a more modern sense Mark Pauline and SRL. The idea of being nomadic and driving down the endless highway is so American. Getting in your chevy and driving down the highway for twenty hours is alien to European thought. If you drove from New York to L.A. in Europe you'd be in Moscow. (laughs)

COYOTE 25: Another point to make is that, without the use of television people here are pretty much isolated into their own little communities, their own worlds and mindsets. Whereas in more tightly knit societies, it's really hard to keep from rubbing elbows with people and maintaining an individuality without needing a lot of courage. I think another important thing about America as opposed to a place like Europe is that as far as the collective unconscious of a culture, or a certain place on the globe, we don't have the history of the reign of Christianity, at least not for as long. I think that leads to a more free, liberating type of attitude, there's more variety.

12: I want to mention a couple of things here first. I really try to avoid using the term "America" to refer to North America or the U.S., because America refers to two continents. Technically this country is the United States of America, not America. Our South American neighbours object very heartily in Spanish to our exclusive use of the term to refer to people from the U.S.. I'm surprised that more Canadians don't object to it as well. If you think about it, it's a kind of linguistic imperialism. There's a Spanish term that's used which means "United Statesian." If you say you're American they give you a really dirty look and say, "No. You're a 'United Statesian,' because we're Americans too." It's fascistic in a subtle sense. Since this is going to Canada, I think it's interesting that Canadians don't object to the term, they're just as much Americans as Mexicans, or people from the U.S..

The other thing is that Europe had their Moral Majority thing several hundred years ago and they decided they didn't much care for it. The fundamentalist cults, cliques, and muck-rakers are looked upon with a great deal of cynicism and more than a few grains of salt. Really, there's less fundamentalism in general, and much less moral repression in Europe at the moment, than there is here. It seems that Christianity, everywhere except the United States and the Third World, has been on the decline for several decades.



25: It appears that Canada goes out of its way to keep that separation from the U.S., because it doesn't want to be more allied with a certain world power than any others. I think it's a very beneficial thing for Canada to maintain it's own identity.

105: It doesn't try to be police force for anyone but itself.

12: Well they certainly are, they're in NATO. There's a reasonably significant Canadian presence in western Europe, like bases in Germany.

But, I know there are a lot of people in Canada who are really bummed-out about the Free Trade agreement, because it's basically a green light for United Statesian products to be brought into Canada. Apparently, there's a lot more U.S. products desired in Canada than there are Canadian products here, so the trade balance is heavily in our favour. In the end, Canadian business lost out. Many people think the Canadian government was bullied into it by the U.S., so I think there is a great deal of repression of Canada by the United States as well.

EF: TOPYUS sent me a copy of **The Grey Book — An Introduction to the Temple Ov Psychick Youth**, and on the first page is written, "Its circulation is special — no part ov it may be reproduced in any way by any person." Yet in **Television Magick**, TOPYUS writes, "This booklet is intended as information. Poets don't own words, neither do magicians!" Wasn't **The Grey Book** also intended as information? It seems strange that I (not a member of TOPY) would receive "secret" information.

12: Obviously, **The Grey Book** isn't "secret" information. If we didn't send it out to people who aren't members of TOPY, there wouldn't be any members of TOPY. We don't want it reproduced because we don't want it to be taken out of context. In a sense we want to have some degree of control, or at least knowledge, of which people are getting access to what information.

25: It sort of keeps people who contact the Temple to those who are truly active and who will follow it through. It keeps the mail to a minimum, by keeping it with people who are really interested and are willing to pursue their interests instead of some

word of mouth thing being passed around.

105: ...in which case it gets gradually more distorted. It's like, "Well, I read that you had to get tattoos," or "I read that if you join you have to get piercings." I've actually heard that from people. I put up a flyer in Kansas City one time because I saw a lot of Psychick Crosses sprayed around, and I wondered who was doing this and why they were doing it. Some guy contacted me, and he'd heard all these incredible things about initiations you had to go through, and tattoos and piercings you had to get, and stuff like that. People misinterpret the fact that we do have a lot of similar interests, which can be tattoos, piercing, ritual, and stuff like that, but it's not required at all. It's not something you have to do in the least to be involved with it. That's something that really gets misinterpreted. It's like the title of "Cult", in the sense that you have to do things to yourself to get into it. TOPY is about total freedom of choice, nothing is required- except spilling things on the carpet. (spilling sounds)

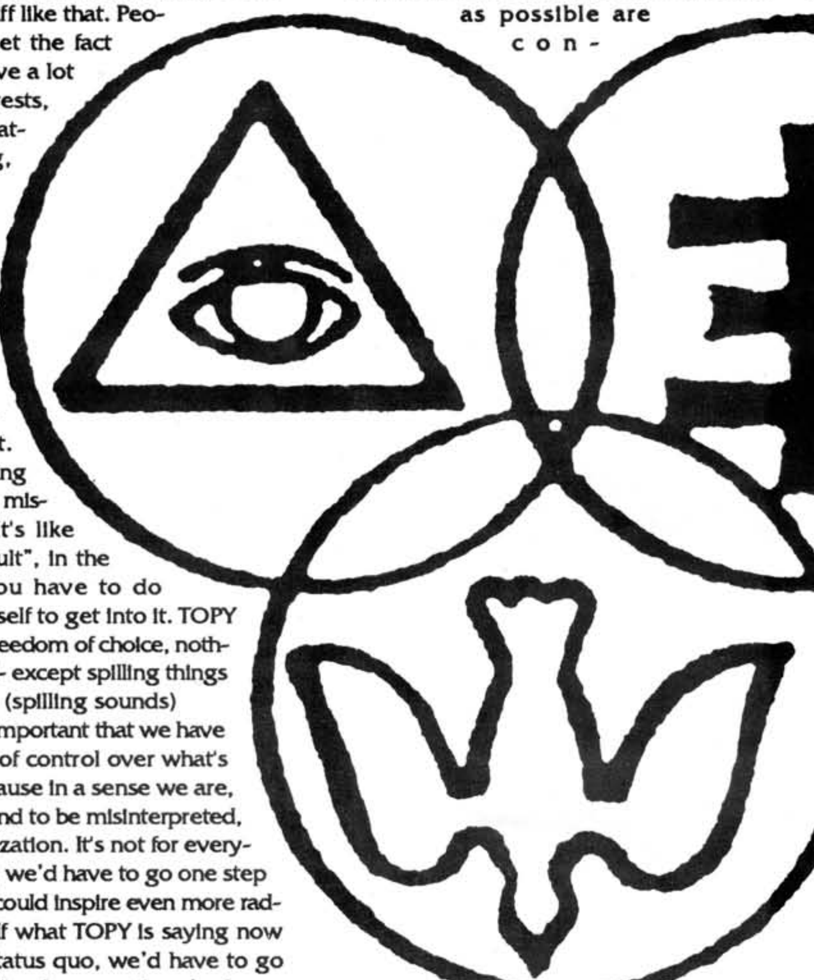
12: I feel that it's important that we have some degree of control over what's going on, because in a sense we are, and this is bound to be misinterpreted, an elite organization. It's not for everybody. If it was, we'd have to go one step further, so we could inspire even more radical thinking. If what TOPY is saying now became the status quo, we'd have to go that much further because there's always going to be a small group of people pushing the limits. Therefore, we need to limit the number of people involved to an extent, because otherwise it becomes a fashion rather than a statement.

25: I think in a lot of ways it already has.

12: I think that's a question of interpretation. Most of the people who think it's fashionable really aren't doing the work.

25: Many people might think that the goal of the Temple is to gain new members, which it is in a sense. But as far as efficiency and getting things done goes, a handful of active members outweigh a mass of people who are just there to tell their friends that they're into this revolutionary-type organization.

12: Yeah. Basically, there's only three people in Denver that are active in TOPY in an office sense, and there's a number of enclaves in various unnamed states that are much larger, and on the surface much more verbally committed to doing TOPY stuff than anyone here is. Yet, they've had a much smaller input because they can never agree on what needs to be done. Whereas here, things are done on a more or less unilateral basis. Of course, as many people as possible are con-



sulted on major decisions, but it's pretty autocratic in the sense that I've been doing it for going on four years now. Various people have helped at various times, but I'm the lowest common denominator because the most time anyone else has put in has been a year. A lot of it has my personal identity and my goals linked in, which is a good thing for the sake of efficiency. Although sometimes I tend to get blinded by what I want to do, and obsessed with one project which may not be the most crucial thing at the moment. But all in all, as far as efficiency goes with regard to getting things out, projects done, and letters answered, somebody needs to be in charge of it. At this time I seem to be the best person for that job, and I'm comfortable with it most of the time... some of the time... sometimes. [laughs]

25: Maybe you could talk about how TOPY doesn't so much produce official documents anymore, and how you've gone away from that to focus on material that's a composite of the individual members in TOPY.

12: When TOPY was starting in the U.S., it was basically a matter of putting out things. When the early mailers came out there was no material to work with. Genesis sent in a few writings from various time periods, and there were bits and pieces that I'd written, and that basically comprised the first couple of mailers. But now, every month we get about fifty pages of good material, like artwork, individual research projects, and essays. So, it's become a lot more populist, and people are actually creating information. They've read information from the Temple, and been inspired to write, which in turn becomes the next wave of information for others to write about. At this point the information is 5th or 6th generation feedback from an initial statement made by TOPY maybe two years ago that has inspired various forms of commentary from different people. That's pretty much what it seems to be about at this point. You make this very vague definition of what TOPY might be or could be, and you attract people who are interested in that, those lowest common denominators.

For example; I'd say a real key thing is, if not sexual freedom, then at least sexual honesty: being honest with yourself about what you want to get out of your sexuality. What sorts of situations you'd like to see happen to you on a sexual level. I think most people aren't that honest with themselves about what they want. If they just want to have anal sex with some woman or man, then a lot of people will kid themselves that they're in love with the specific

person that's made that situation available to them. I think honesty is really the most important thing with TOPY.

105: In all areas, not necessarily sexual.

12: And some sort of dedication to ritual is really important too. Not in any dogmatic sense, but at a sort of conceptual level. True concentration and some way of getting you out of everyday consciousness (preferably for me, not using drugs, because it's really difficult to concentrate), so that you're able to focus on something and actually imprint your consciousness to create some form of alternative reality. That's really pivotal in the Temple.

So we take those two statements and say, "Well, this could be what TOPY's about." Then we let people play with that idea, like in the "Ritual of the 3 Liquids," as it's so prosaically called in **The Grey Book**. We tell people to: "Think of a sexual fantasy while you bring yourself to orgasm, cut yourself, and cut off some of your hair." That's the gist of the ritual. We don't tell people anything else, so it gives everyone a wide open arena in which to experiment with things that work for them. They can paint pictures, use music or film, they can draw on themselves, or on someone else. They can do their ritual on an autoerotic level, in an S & M sense, or at an orgy. All of those things could easily meet the quote-unquote "requirements" of that specific ritual, but it leaves room for innovation. A person can take a Crowley-type ritual, or a Pagan, Wiccan, or American Indian ritual, and easily tailor it to fit those criteria.

EF: I've seen many references to Aleister Crowley in TOPY writings. How does his work fit in with TOPY's magick system?

12: Aleister Crowley... oh boy... I guess, in a way I'm more fortunate than a lot of people, because I own a great deal of his work. He was sort of my first exposure to the occult and a lot of other schools of thought. But I'm sort of bored with him myself. I find that one book leads to another and you have to have about 15 to be able to do a banishing ritual, and you have to own 3 goats [laughter all round], and have 15 little boys around...

25: ...and maids in waiting...

12: ...and a cup made of gold and three pieces of turmalaine...

25: ...and a titanium sword...

105: ...that's been forged out of the deepest centres of the Earth...

25: ...and a castle. [HA HA HA]

12: I think Crowley made that one up because he found somebody with enough money to buy him one.

25: You need lots of coke and heroin too.

12: Yeah. There's a lot of Crowley's life that I find to be really sordid.

105: [laughter and clapping] I'll agree with that.

12: He really wasn't this tuned-in sort of peace/love hippie guy, or this amazingly



well-disciplined person. He was a megalomaniac, con-man, junkie who had a lot of good ideas, and those ideas are certainly worth checking out. I think a lot of people, myself included, within TOPY are sort of closet Thelemites, and in a sense TOPY is a kindergarten for people that will end up going into this so-called higher form of magick; which to me, for the most part, is just intellectual masturbation and play-acting.

If time is money you'd get a better bargain learning Greek and joining a theatre troup. But that's a personal opinion, a lot of people get a lot out of it. TOPY's definitely influenced a great deal by Crowley, though none of his more famous works.

He was the first person who really tried to cross reference a lot of different religions. He accepted the basic underlying validity of all of them, and was able to take what he found useful out of them, recombine them and mix and match to experiment with things. I think that spirit has contributed greatly to the Temple's philosophy.

105: Exactly. The good part about the Temple is that it draws from so many sources, so many extremes, but it takes what's useful. Take it out of its original context and apply it to your own contexts. It's like using a quote, from any kind of writing, philosophy, or lifestyle and throw it into a new context which is kind of vague in itself. Then derive from that what you want to see in it, and interpret it yourself.

12: Two people that are a lot more important to the Temple's philosophy are Austin Spare and Brion Gysin. For those who don't know, Brion Gysin is the guy who invented the Cut-Up Method. He and Burroughs did most of the early experiments with that. Basically TOPY is taking Crowley, or Tantric Sex Magick, or American Indian Shamanism, or who knows what, and applying the Cut-Up method to it. The underlying theory of the Cut-Up method is that when words are taken out of their context, and then randomly put back together, they assume a power that was only latent in their original form. I think that could very well be true with magickal philosophy and practice as well. When things are taken out of their original contexts and mixed with other unrelated things, you can end up with a very powerful combination of events.

25: Crowley sort of communicates a contradiction to me, and this turns off a lot of other people as well. For me, the purpose of magick is liberating the human spirit, and when reading Crowley I see something very restrictive, and just so full of this structured dribble, that it can turn people off magick itself. I'm much more interested in shamanic-type rituals that seem to be based more on instinct than doing a specific action to get a specific result. It's much more interesting, and for me ritual is fun. It's something that can invoke ecstasy just

in its undertaking, which in itself, is almost a good enough reason to do it. And that's what it's all about. It's to generate some energy, to invoke ecstasy, and to learn to accept chaos as something interesting instead of something to be feared. That could add very valuable and interesting experiences to one's life. And why not take all the energy that's invoked by the process and direct it at some desire to enhance the whole process and continue improving the self, and exploring the potential of the human mind and the human spirit?

12: I don't think that any of us can deny that we're Thelemites, in that we, or at least most of us, accept the Law of Thelema as being sort of a given. That "There is No God but Man," "Do What Thou Wilt Shall be the Whole of the Law," and that "Love is the Law, Love Under Will." That's a good, lowest common denominator starting point.

And the O.T.O. has proven to be a really good ally all in all. The O.T.O. is Crowley's organization, or the one he took over, and is more or less a Masonic group which works with the Law of Thelema. But I'm not very interested in Freemasonry because it's too stylized. I have found that a lot of the people that are really interested in higher rituals didn't have a very religious upbringing in their youth. I was raised in a fairly religious family, and every Sunday we went to church. I hate church, and my dislike for it is a complete rejection of the whole idea of congregational ritual. In the Catholic congregational ritual the Priest acts as a focus for the power and actually handles and channels the power, and he somehow transfers it, through the eucharist or something, to the audience. It's like a '70's rock concert; **Cheap Trick** or someone, and that's just not my thing. I'd rather slamdance and become part of it. I get that feeling and channel it myself, rather than have someone do it for me, and I'm not interested in doing it for other people.

25: Yeah. Instead of channeling through the Priest, it's sort of a communal thing, everyone gets out as much as they put in. But, even group rituals are an individual experience because all you are is your individual self. So each person in a ritual is the centre of that ritual. Which opens it for every person to experience something unique, instead of some prescribed, preconceived notion of what the person should experience.

105: Laid down 2000 fucking years ago. Organized religion doesn't seem to realize that people change through time. Going through the same acts that people have gone through, and continue to go through, seems to somehow diminish the energy through the ritual's perpetuation. It's like you're not dealing...

12: [breaks in] That's interesting, because I see exactly the opposite.

105: Really?

12: I'm really into the concept of the timeless repetition of certain acts. To me, that is the most interesting thing about Hinduism and all of the great old religions. For example, *Vaisnava*, the worship of Vishnu, can be traced back thousands of years in a direct succession. Certain words and gestures have been passed from the teacher to the disciple who then becomes the teacher. Through the passing of various relics, you can actually trace a dynasty of religion back. The Roman Catholic Church can be traced back to the Roman mysteries and further, in an unbroken line of people handing esoteric information to each other. I think that's the only thing established religion has going for it.

In a sense TOPY's trying to do that too. We're creating our own iconography and beginning to get some sacred objects that have meaning. In our lifetimes, they won't have gotten to a sort of deified level, but I think that there are a number of things in this house that, in a couple of hundred years, could be just amazing talismans to be passed down.

25: An important thing that TOPY is doing is pushing the idea that all available knowledge is a tool to be used. Knowledge is not a "master", or something finite and so-called truth, a doctrine. You must be able to use everything as a tool — see the parallels between the different things that different religions have undertaken. Then you can find something that works for you. The self becomes your own religion, your own state, your own entity; you are your own world and you go from there.

12: But I have a real problem with people who react against Christianity too. It just doesn't enter my life in any way. I don't react against it, and I'm not for it. In my world, Christianity is a thing that other people do. It has the same bearing on my life that epilepsy has on yours, unless you're epileptic. It's not something I get angry about or worked up over. It's the old Satanist paradox, in a sense, a Satanist is the most devout Christian of all. Hinduism has a parallel too; if you're a devout worshipper of a Hindu God, it takes 1000 incarnations, or something, to be liberated from the birth/death cycle. However, if you have enmity toward said deity you're liberated in 3 incarnations, because the deity is always on their mind and it rubs off. Whereas a devout person will slip every now and then.

25: To acknowledge the opposite force, or to blaspheme it, is to acknowledge that it has some play in your life.

12: Exactly. And the whole thing about Crowleyism or Christianity is that they're essentially religions, I don't feel that TOPY is a religious organization. I think that possibly one of the bigger conflicts within TOPY is that I represent TOPY and I do a hell of a lot of work for TOPY, but at the same time I don't feel that TOPY is "Right", and that

it's the organization that's "going on". For example, I have a lot of respect for a lot of people in the O.T.O.; they're doing their thing and we're doing ours. Sometimes our paths will cross and we'll end up doing things together.

105: I don't think we ever promote ourselves as "The Answer," it's just a suggestion. Nothing we lay down is anything anybody **should** do. These are things that we've found work for us — maybe they'll work for you, and maybe you can add something to it...

12: ...if you want to. It goes back to the whole thing of how many members are active. You, for example Eric; I think that TOPY, as an organization, and certainly me, as an individual, is comfortable with you doing an interview with us- by somewhat circuitous means. We consider you to be every bit as good an ally as someone who does a ritual once a month. In the sense of actual output, this interview is probably a great deal more beneficial towards TOPY as a whole, than the concept of sending a wet piece of paper every month. So we don't really see things in terms of Temple and non-Temple members, although there is a certain cut-off point.

105: These people are more involved.

12: Well no, that's what I'm saying, it's just involvement on a different level. Eric is involved at an information and networking level, while maybe we're working on a more ritual level. For example, if you bowl with someone, and you work in a restaurant with someone else, it doesn't mean that the bowler is a better friend. But, you're going to talk to one about cooking and one about bowling. That doesn't imply a hierarchy of any sort, just different levels of communication.

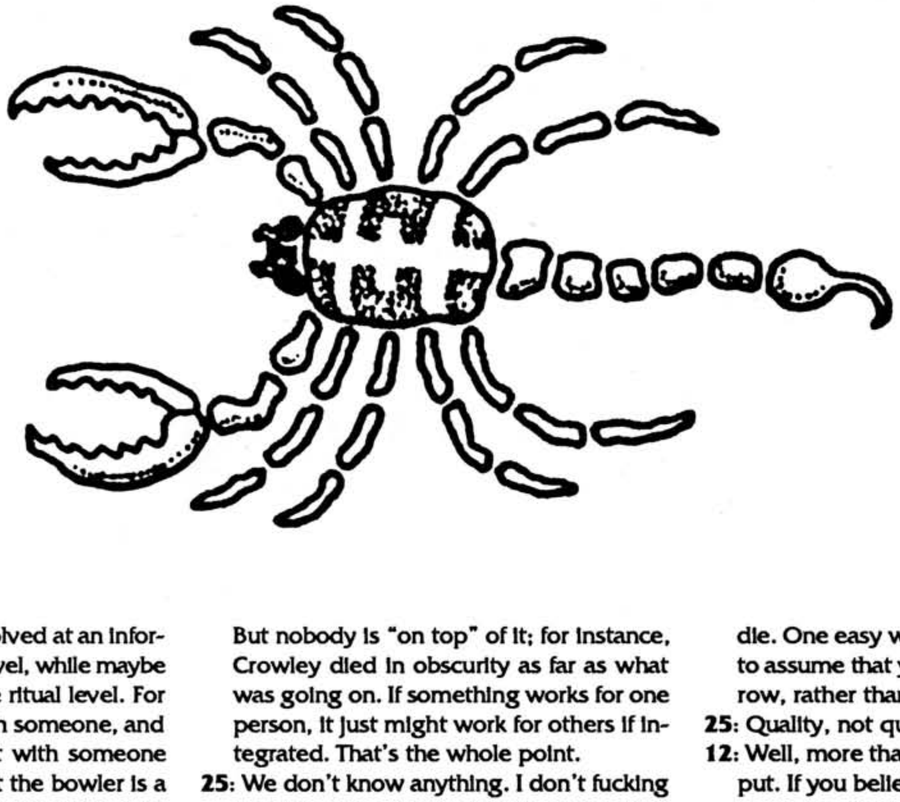
25: Then again, the foundation is that it supports the idea of personal experience being applied to the actions and future experiences of that person. The Temple doesn't judge people by them not fitting into a certain structure. It incorporates the knowledge and experience that a person has uncovered and integrates it. That's why there's no reason to knock Christianity, there's a lot to be gained by studying it.

12: What? [laughing]

25: I think Wilhelm Reich portrays Christ fairly, as a symbol — a metaphor to be taken on an individual level. By associating experience with symbol, a metaphor paves the way for their own mythology, which is then put out into the network for other people to feed from.

105: There is no basic foundation, no mythology. There's no tome to read certain words from and do this and that. It's about creating your own. Everybody's in a different universe, everybody has their unique reality.

Another big thing is that people are afraid to express themselves, and I'm no exception- it's like "So and so knows much more than I do, and I'm not advanced enough the share my experiences with anyone."



But nobody is "on top" of it; for instance, Crowley died in obscurity as far as what was going on. If something works for one person, it just might work for others if integrated. That's the whole point.

25: We don't know anything. I don't fucking know anything, I may claim to, and I might sound like I do, but I don't.

12: Sometimes the most ignorant people (not stupid, just ignorant), give me the most insightful feedback on issues. The key is explaining something in the clearest terms possible, without being condescending. You must communicate as an equal; even if they don't have the intellectual background, they've probably had an experience that ties in really well with your thoughts. Everybody has experiences and ideas that are useful on some level, and it's tragic that they're conditioned or have intimidated themselves.

I don't think it's societal either, I don't blame society for anything. For example, what do I do to destroy the ozone layer? Rather than blaming the multi-nationals or the governments, I say "I'm the problem, therefore I'm the solution." If everybody could look at things in that context it would eliminate a lot of the feelings of helplessness that people have. Individuals make decisions; it's too easy to blame them on a higher power — be it God, Government, Gorbachev, Bush, Reagan, or whatever. Eastern Europe shows that the people could have done this decades ago. The soldiers would have refused to shoot then too. The people finally realized there's no power.

The whole idea is a classic Manson statement, but we don't like to talk about him much anymore, he's been mentioned too much. The premise is; You're already dead, why not be free? I think about that a lot, in contexts like AIDS. You could sleep with people and get AIDS, but wouldn't it be a drag to not sleep with anyone and then get run over by a truck? A basic premise of the Temple, which hasn't been explored much recently but is always there is that: We're all going to die. One easy way to have quality in life is to assume that you're going to die tomorrow, rather than the day after tomorrow.

25: Quality, not quantity.

12: Well, more than that. It's a matter of output. If you believe you're going to die tomorrow, you do everything you can today. You see it time and again in people with terminal illnesses, and it might be too late by that time.

105: Or if a family member or your girlfriend dies — there's so much left unsaid, so much left undone. If your mindset is that anybody can go at any time, a situation like that would be less likely to arise. People try to put off death, and religion makes it a little less frightening.

25: Metaphorically, I believe that Eros and Thanatos are twins. **Coil** mentions that too.

["The Golden Section", on ***Horse Rotorvator***] The way I picture it, death is not to be shunned. You must accept it as inevitable and use that to your advantage. To me, death is the ultimate union. Whether consciousness continues or not is another story.

12: To me, death is the end, nothing happens afterwards. My life is based on the assumption that if I don't get it now, I never will. A lot of people put off fun now, on the promise of a bigger payoff in the next world. From the perspective of an action-oriented philosophy, I'd rather think that you die and turn into an unconscious lump of clay, and that's it.

25: Belief in life after death or reincarnation, perpetuates a lackadaisical outlook on what is possible in this life, and that potential is pretty amazing. The possibilities of the individual's creative process is literally unlimited. My personal interpretation of the word sin is, to not explore, and not try to manifest those possibilities.

EF: There seems to be an awfully wide range of viewpoints between the three of you. Do you feel that this, in some way, reflects the Temple philosophy? When we started the interview I expected a much more unified opinion, and it's turned out to be, more or less, a dialogue. What do you guys feel about that?

25: I would say, "Exactly!"

105: That's what it is; a culmination of information from different sources. It's not a set-in-stone statement, it's the sum total.

25: To use [Coyote 12] as an example, he has put the most time and energy into TOPY, so his feelings and ideas incorporate the ideas of the people he's in contact with. He follows his personal mythology and it can't help but be dominant. But anyone else can match his output with their own vision.

12: I'd put that differently. I'm a central focus for everyone's desires and opinions regarding TOPY. Therefore I get a sort of Gallup poll of what people think TOPY is. I try to take those very divergent opinions and find a common thread. Then I organize it, clean it up, and put it out in a pure form to make it into some sort of field theory.

25: Which is a product of the work you've done and the initiative it took to make the correspondences happen.

12: It's a product of everybody else's work, I don't think TOPY has written more than 10 letters to people who haven't written here first. You have to show some interest and take some initiative, then I get paper and put it back out in the mailer. And we disagree heartily sometimes. For example, in the mailer that just came out [**Psychick Graffiti**, Feb. 90] I don't think there's one piece that I absolutely agree with, I'd have qualified it with footnotes if it had been my place to do so. But, we just put out information and let other people analyze it. It's not our place to decide what is, or is not, useful information. A piece that I think is completely obvious and a bit redundant might be able to inspire someone to do something on their own with no support system to back them up. It's safer to join a group of people doing it already, it doesn't take nearly the fortitude.

EF: Perhaps you could all make one sort of concise statement or positive reflection to sum this up.

12: Do't wait for anyone else to do it. Don't wait for the Temple or anyone else to say it. Just go out and do it yourself. It doesn't matter if you're a member of any quasi-religious philosophical group or not. Everybody has the power to change the world they live in, and with whatever method they choose to do that — try it, it's fun. It's an adventure that never ends. You're always learning, going places and meeting people that might be going to the same place on a different route. There's so many people involved in this little underbelly of society that it's a shame if you don't get involved. If you're inclined that way, do it. It doesn't matter what people think.

25: I'd add the inspiration factor to that. Inspiration contains so much energy in itself, and I can get it reading other people's research, and watching them pushing forward to advance themselves. People who try to change the stagnation that society tends to feed on inspire me. Hopefully TOPY inspires individuality and helps break down the walls of what people can achieve on an individual level.

105: The Temple is an effort, a stab in the dark. Maybe it works, maybe it doesn't; that's not the point. The point is the effort and inspiration to try. There's no way to premeditate the outcome and that's part of the thrill. It's like constantly trying to not worry about how people are evolving and how the world's running down further all the time, instead you worry about yourself. The more you widen and improve your outlook, the more it will naturally reflect on your environment. I think that's what people should concentrate on.

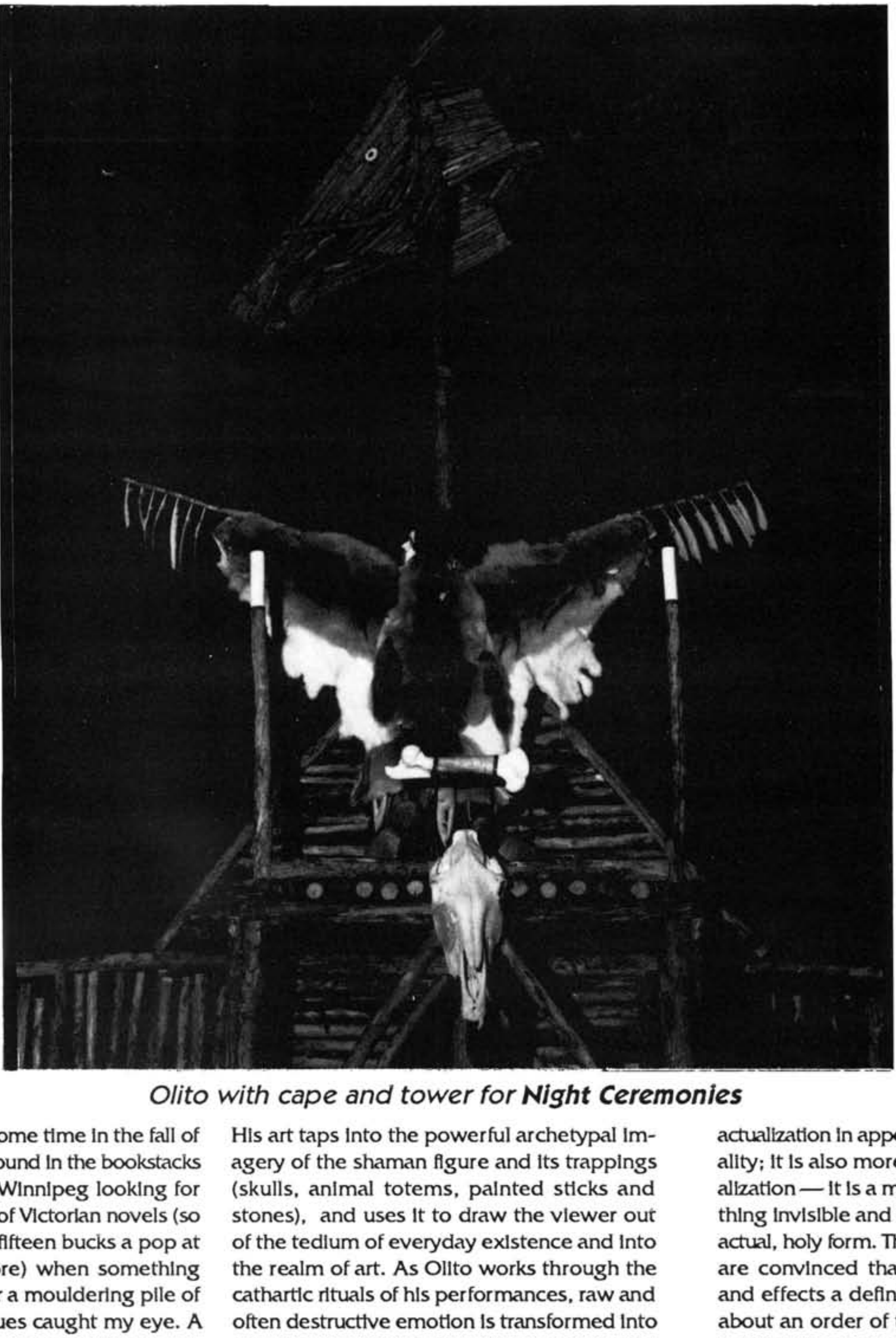
12: One last note. I've done quite a bit of research into the more extreme side of human thought and behaviour, and I find that every age has its Aleister Crowley and its Austin Spare. Going back into the earliest recorded history there's always been a heretic or madman who challenged established thought and morals. Our age is a sort of intellectual desert. The behaviour of the average person is to a large degree, very predictable. I can't help but think it's going to become more so, before it becomes less so. If I could do one thing it would be to leave a mark permanent enough so some kid in 2250 can find some Psychick Youth literature in a library and say: "Wow!. I'm not alone, there's been people doing this all the time." The kid will be aware of a whole dynasty that has been developing these forms of more extreme, or free, or liberated, or magickal, or ritualistic, or animistic thinking. If I can be a needle in a haystack for somebody in the future, and leave a little mark to tell them they're on the right path, then that would be enough. It would vindicate this whole mess and the hassles and the work that comes with it.

> *"Consciousness is a much smaller part of our mental life than we are conscious of, because we can not be conscious of what we are not conscious of."*
>
> Julian Jaynes
>
> **The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind**

Involvement with Thee Temple ov Psychick Youth requires an active individual, dedicated towards thee establishment of a functional system of magick and a modern pagan philosophy without recourse to mystification, gods or demons; but recognizing thee implicit powers of thee human brain (neuromancy) linked with guiltless sexuality focussed through will structure (sigils). Magick empowers thee individual to embrace and realize their dreams and maximize their natural potential. It is for those with thee courage to touch themselves. It integrates all levels of thought in thee first steps towards final negation of control and fear.

Our aim is wakefulness — our enemy is dreamless sleep.

Beautiful Wings Rising Up: The art of Mike Olito



Olito with cape and tower for ***Night Ceremonies***

This is a True Story: Some time in the fall of 1987, I was grubbing around in the bookstacks of Pyramid Records in Winnipeg looking for old paperback editions of Victorian novels (so I wouldn't have to pay fifteen bucks a pop at the University bookstore) when something sticking out from under a mouldering pile of **Rolling Stone** back issues caught my eye. A closer look revealed it to be an Exhibition catalog from the Winnipeg Art Gallery, ca. 1986. On the cover was a triple-exposure of a large hairy man, naked from the waist up (unless you count the red and white makeup slathered all over his torso), wielding a birch staff, also painted red and white.

Screw Anthony Trollope and his buddies. This was **really** interesting.

The catalog for **Earth-Dialogue/Earth-Sound** was my first exposure to the art of Mike Olito, but it made a lasting impression. His art taps into the powerful archetypal imagery of the shaman figure and its trappings (skulls, animal totems, painted sticks and stones), and uses it to draw the viewer out of the tedium of everyday existence and into the realm of art. As Olito works through the cathartic rituals of his performances, raw and often destructive emotion is transformed into events and objects of startling and unusual beauty.

Although Olito's use of shamanistic imagery is primarily metaphorical- he clearly doesn't consider himself a "real" shaman; when I showed him an early draft of this interview, he laughed and said, "Christ, I sound like the High Priest of the Old Religion." I still think the most concise description of the mechanics of an Olito piece can be found in Johann Huizinga's definition of a "sacred performance":

The sacred performance is more than an actualization in appearance only, a sham reality; it is also more than a symbolic actualization — it is a mystical one. In it, something invisible and inactual takes beautiful, actual, holy form. The participants in the rite are convinced that the action actualizes and effects a definite beatification, brings about an order of things higher than that in which they customarily live. All the same this "actualization by representation" still retains the formal characteristics of play in every respect. It is played or performed within a playground that is literally "staked out," and played moreover as a feast, i.e. in mirth and freedom. A sacred space, a temporarily real world of its own, has been expressly hedged off for it. But with the end of the play its effect is not lost; rather it continues to shed its radiance on the ordinary world outside, a wholesome influ-

ence working security, order and prosperity for the whole community until the sacred play season comes round again. (Huizinga 14)

When this passage is compared to Olito's description of his upcoming **Night Ceremony** piece, for example (see the following interview), the parallels are immediately obvious: a space defined as play-ground by a wooden stockade becomes the site of a performance/feast where Art (invisible and inactual) takes on a tangible form. Whether the art will exert an ongoing, beneficial influence past the time of the actual performance remains to be seen, but judging from previous works, this will likely be the case. The **Earth-Dialogue/ Earth-Sound** piece at the Winnipeg Art Gallery had a participating audience of over a thousand people who, by continuing the banging of their rhythm sticks-and-stones long after Olito had anticipated, literally refused to let the performance end; the situation eventually resolved itself into an enormous party.

I recently had the chance to talk to Olito about his art, past, present and future; I hope that in the text of this interview, I've managed to convey some of the richness and complexity of his work.



Olito in the cave during ***Earth Encounters***

DARREN WERSHLER-HENRY: I guess where I'd like to start is with how the theme of shamanism fits with the poetics of your art. Johann Huizinga's **Homo Ludens** and Mircea Eliade's **The Sacred and the Profane** both talk about the re-sacralizing of space in a non-spiritual society. I started to think about your **Earth-Dialogue/Earth-Sound** performance (when you staked out a space for your performance, and had people on the four corners of the map expanding the square) in that context. Would you talk about your art as an attempt to re-establish sacred space in a secular world?

MIKE OLITO: Many pieces that I've done, and the flow of my art in general, weren't defined in those terms when I did them. Much of my art reminds people of North American Indian work or of African stuff, but I really hadn't read much into their respective traditions at the time. As I go along, of course, I become more interested, because when I did start doing some reading I found remarkable parallels. At the same time though, I try and fight against any sort of conscious learning of "primitive" non-European style religious thought, because I don't want it to fuel my art directly. But again, I can never ignore the parallels.

As for the term "shamanism," it's used all the time to describe my art, but I'm not sure whether it's a valid use of the term or not. We don't have shamans in our society; we don't even have effective priests anymore. We're in a society- not without religion- but without a spiritual half to it, outside of a vague sense of morality, and that concerns me. I like the new shamanism or pseudo-religious work that's being done in performance art (whatever you want to call it), but I never want to think that I'm trying to be a real shaman or a real priest, because I know I'm not. As I was saying before, our present culture is a culture largely without religion, without a real spiritual base. The artist naturally sort of starts to fill that role. And I don't think he can take it on with the sort of official pomp of the old religions, but he does become the one who speaks the moral codes of our society. I don't mean just the visual artists, but the writers and poets and even musicians (although when you're talking about popular music I'm not sure that there's much co-opting of the priesthood).

DWH: So what were you talking about when you did the **Rites of Passage** performance, when you described building the shield and gathering magic around you as you worked?

MO: I like to think of the art pieces as fictions to describe what I'm thinking, or to describe how I'm feeling about the world. And so when I talk about building the shield to be so beautiful that it would protect me, that's in part a fiction. It's a link between the piece I did and the outside world. In actual fact, painting the shield won't make it protect me, but within the context of the piece, it does. And I have to think totally within the context of the piece, and build the strength of the piece, to have the concentration and energy when I'm doing the piece to make it ring true.

DWH: So are you moving away from the shamanistic aspect of art in your current work?

MO: No. I'm going more and more to pieces that involve actual physical endurance during the piece.

DWH: So what are you working on now? I remember reading something in the paper recently about a piece you were working on where you had built a sort of underground chamber...

MO: In England I did that, it turned out to be a two-part piece called **Earth Encounter.**

DWH: What happened?

MO: I got an artist-in-residenceship at Newcastle, England. I was born in England actually, and came over here when I was three. The area where I got this artist-in-residenceship was an old mining area that had closed down, so I decided on a burrowing piece, where I burrowed into the ground. The idea was to make a tunnel into the ground, and I'd be sitting at the end of the tunnel, lit by a shaft of light from above, and people would discover me in there. It was built in a sort of busy urban park, in an old railroad embankment actually, and people would wander in there

and discover me. We burrowed back 20 feet and completely covered it all over, and we disguised the entrance (we replanted the weeds and everything), so it was just a 4-foot hole in the front of the hill. You went in about 7 feet and it opened into a bigger chamber, and then you went in another 7 feet and it opened into an even bigger chamber. I was sitting in there under this beam of light. The encounter with them would be the piece of art.

But what happened was, they have a thing called Guy Fawkes night over there. I had my piece totally built, dug the earth and shored it up with railroad ties. On Guy Fawkes night, which was the night before I was to install myself in there, people poured gasoline in and lit it on fire. So I came out the next morning and found these spectacular ruins, which sort of scuttled that piece.

DWH: So in a sense, your ritual was subverted or countered by theirs.

MO: It's a bit more complicated than that. There's a sort of drift in my art- I describe my art as a process of "ritual de-urbanization." It started by bringing "natural," or rural things if you like, into urban spaces like the Winnipeg Art Gallery, when we brought in all these sticks and stones. There was also the piece in Ottawa, when I brought a horse in a big stockade into the city. In Newcastle, when I attempted to do the piece in an urban setting, it was destroyed.

After I sulked for a week, and contemplated coming back to Canada and cancelling the thing entirely, I reacted by deciding to do the piece in a rural setting. I found these wonderful caves where they'd drilled into the cliff face in the 1860's or 70's to get stone to build this viaduct. There was this beautiful series of caves going like cathedrals into the cliff, so I established myself on a ledge in the back of one of these caves. I had a directional line of stones pointing in, which was an element of the other pieces also. But this was a very remote site and you couldn't see the stones very well because there was a cliff there. So I decided that while I was to be in residence in the thing (for a week during daylight hours; I started at ten in the morning and left at dark) that I would strike two sticks together constantly to draw people into the cave. I did this constantly unless I had visitors.

DWH: [looking at a picture of the cave mouth] I think some of the graffiti is very interesting.

MO: Oh Christ, yes. Some of that graffiti was over 100 years old.

DWH: It's interesting to go into a space like that with its own sort of "sacred markings" and add your own to them.

MO: Actually, when I'd finished the piece I chiseled my name into the wall.

DWH: Did you leave the stones and so forth there?

MO: On the day I finished, I lay my sticks down and left everything. There was also a ring of stones surrounding me- it's fairly involved- because there was an avenue of stones leading in, and a ring of stones surrounding me. There were seven stones, because I was there seven days.

DWH: Did anyone find you?

MO: There were two kinds of people who found me, people I'd told of course, and passers-by. And some of the passers-by were quite interesting. One thought he had heard water, because there were a whole series of caves, and the sound from the sticks made reverberations. He knew there was no water down there so he came to check it out. Another was a mountain climber, who was practicing climbing across the roof of the cave, and he looks down at me and says, "I don't know what **you're** doing in here, but I'm nobody to question what anybody does." (laughs)

DWH: What kind of things did you think about when you were in there? Did you have a thought agenda that was part of the piece, or did you just let your mind wander?

MO: Originally, when I was going to do the first piece in the back of the underground chamber I'd dug, the sound part didn't enter into it, because it was a fairly well-travelled area, and I had a nice green field in front that I was going to plant my avenue stones in, so there would have been a lot of people seeing it. When I decided to do this hitting of sticks, it changed it all, because I was trying to think, what was I going to do when I was in there? Was I going to read, do crossword puzzles to pass the time, keep a diary, or what? I finally decided to make myself more conscious of the time by hitting the sticks, so I wouldn't be able to do these other distracting things. I was forced into a total meditative mental state. I've done trancing in several of my pieces. I'm interested in trancing; I've tried it and it's worked well, but it was too cold in the cave. I don't know if you know anything about it, but if you trance in very cold weather — for some reason, I don't know what it is — you get awfully cold. So that was out.

The first day in the cave was really hard, because I was sort of confused about what I was going to do. The next day was the weekend, and people came, but after that I really started consciously working out the big installation piece I'm going to do this summer. I hadn't worked out the central structure in my mind, so I spent the rest of the time closely working out the details in my head. It worked out really nice, because this hitting thing became an element of the ongoing piece.

DWH: So this one is going to feed into the one you're doing in June? Could you describe that piece for me?

MO: It's called **Night Ceremony** -you see, I often steal titles from Jackson Pollack, 'cause I've got sort of a thing about him.

DWH: I've seen your **Homage to Pollock** box in St. John's College

MO: I also wrote a poem called "Drinking Beer with Jackson Pollock" that was in **NeWest Review**. I just mention that as an aside, because I often steal Pollock's titles.

Anyway, this new piece is called **Night Ceremony**. I'd better set the stage for you. My mother has a farm out near MacGregor, west of Portage, so I've got use of this large area of bush. I'm going to take a group of approximately 30 people out there, and there's going to be a big trail that they follow. In the late afternoon, just as it's starting to get dark, they'll follow this trail that'll snake through the bush for as long as I need so they'll arrive at the performance site just as it's totally dark. They'll come down a long avenue of poplar poles into a circular palisade with a fire in the centre, and at the back is a large 20' by 12' shelter. In front of the shelter is a tower, and I'll be on top of the tower drumming, accompanied by other musicians on the ground. People will come in there, and nothing will happen except this music will continue. There will be a variety of food and drink, and the music will continue. I'm interested in making the audience part of the art, sort of like what I did at the [Winnipeg] Art Gallery, only a little more subtle. They're going to think nothing is happening, and

We're in a society — not without religion — but without a spiritual half to it, outside of a vague sense of morality, and that concerns me

they're going to start talking and reacting, but the music will go on and I'll be up there drumming. This will continue into the night, and there'll be lots to drink and lots to eat, and they'll just stay, on and on. Maybe some of the other musicians will want to stop, which is fine. Eventually, I'll be drumming alone on the tower in the middle of the night. I'll drum from sundown to sunup. I have a large cape made out of fur and feathers, which will be suspended behind me during the drumming — as soon as the sun lights everything up, the drumming stops. And I will, by various tricks I've invented, fly off the tower.

DWH: That really **is** an endurance thing... I wonder how many people will stay awake?

MO: I don't know. I hope that by example I'll keep quite a few. By not stopping drumming they'll see that I'm very serious about this and not stop until dawn. They will be allowed to sleep if they want, though. They can bring sleeping bags and so on, but it would be nice if they stayed awake. I'm hoping to jerk them out of the patterns of their existences. Even if they have to work the next day, if they want to experience the piece properly, they'll have to stay up. They can't just come and see the art and go away. The art doesn't give you the chance to do anything that common. I hope they'll have to expend a little effort and work a little bit.

It was funny when I was in the cave, because people would come in and they'd stay for half an hour or so, but then they'd start thinking about how damned cold it was, and they'd leave. I was hoping that they'd think, "I was only in there for half an hour, and he's been in there all day, and he's been there the day before, and he'll be here the day after this."

DWH: Your art is really more event than object. There are things that you can put in galleries and document, but that's not really the art itself, is it?

MO: I've got a lot of problems in my own head with documentation. I've got videos that I've made — I hired a cinematographer to cover one performance — and I'm still not really sure whether documentation is even valid. But it's damn handy when you want to get grants. (laughs)

DWH: Do you think any of the power of the art is there in the left-over pieces in a residual way?

MO: I hope so. I do keep some of the objects from the performances. Some get lost, some get broken, some get bought by galleries, some get saved by individuals, I save some, but it really doesn't bother me if a thing gets wrecked. Sometimes I take them apart to use them in another performance; sometimes I use them just as they are.

DWH: I like to think of those fragments as traces that you can follow back to somehow reconstruct the original art, or at least to a point where you can find out who made them, and then experience a performance.



Olito takes his responsibilities seriously, drumming for hours

MO: I've heard other people say that; that not just individual pieces, but also photographs and so on were traces of my art. That the art is in the sort of flow of the piece, or of the art as a whole. I think it's the same even with a person who does paintings or sculptures. It's not each individual painting that matters, but the ongoing process.

DWH: I've got something here that you might be interested in- an article on a performance art group in the States called Survival Research Laboratories [**Re/Search #11**]. They build these large machines from scavenged parts, and they often integrate parts of animal carcasses, skulls and so forth, and they stage these huge battles on parking lots. You go into one of their indoor installations and they hand you a pair of goggles and a set of earplugs, and then you sign a waiver in case of injury, (Mark Pauline, the group's founder severely injured one of his hands while building a rocket engine for a performance). Some of their machines remind me of some of the things you've done; this one has a horse skull bolted onto the front of it.

MO: That's a fine looking thing... I did a performance once where I had a horse mask made of sticks which covered an actual horse skull. During the performance I was "killed" with a lance, and the head was butchered with the same lance- the sticks were cut off until the skull emerged.

DWH: Was that the piece that you did with George Amabile?

MO: No, but it was based on that one. That was one of my first performances, and I was going down to London and Windsor [Ontario] to do a piece. I wanted to do something based on it, but I didn't want to do the same thing. In the one I did with George, the mask was broken and the wings of a phoenix rose up from the rubble. In the reincarnation of the piece, the mask was skinned down, leaving the skull, and the skull danced- then another ghost horse came and they both danced.

DWH: It seems to me that that's a bit more bleak than the first time around.

MO: Well, it was a little less mystical. They both imply survival- not of the individual, but of the process. [still looking at the SRL article] I love the idea of these machines...

DWH: Here's another one where they've bolted the head of a pig onto the machine.

MO: Have you seen them in action, or just on video?

DWH: I haven't, but a friend of mine saw an installation in San Francisco (cf. **Virus 23** #0) and a show in Seattle on June 23.

MO: It's interesting in art when you do something that's an actual act of violence. We

had this thing here called Shared Space; it died about two years ago. But it was a wonderful thing. There was a performance art theatre which was set up once a month. It started out in the Art Gallery, then it moved to the Royal Albert Hotel, which was a really nice venue for it. Nobody was edited out. Anybody who wanted to do a performance art piece, or a conventional poetry reading or anything else, a conventional violin player could have performed if they'd wanted to. You'd go at night and sit through about three or four hours of this. Most of it was the most god-awful shit you ever saw, but some of it was absolutely wonderful. And that's where I did my first three performance art pieces. That was where I did the **Phoenix** piece, and it was sort of funny because that was where George actually broke the mask with a club. Before the first blow, it had as much atmosphere as any of the other pieces. When he was circling round me there were even some snickers and a little bit of laughter. But as soon as he lambasted into the thing, and continued that vicious hitting, the whole tone of the audience changed entirely.

DWH: Did you ask him about that after? I imagine there must have been some real hesitancy on his part.

MO: Oh, we did a fair amount of talking about it. He really got into it, because I was the one who decided when to go down. And when I did, I thought, "Well, it's all over." But no... WHAM! And the sticks go flying and WHAM!, and he gets me right across the back of the hand. And he says later, "It was still too much like the shape of a horse. It needed to be broken more." When he took it a step beyond what I had expected through the choreographing, it made it far more interesting.

DWH: There's a moment there where the piece could go anywhere...

MO: And there's also the possibility of actually getting hurt. But by that time, you're so committed to the piece that it wouldn't matter a damn whether you got hurt. It might even make the piece nicer in some ways. Of course there was no danger of really being killed or anything, unless George really went berserk. But there was that minute when I had to wonder, has he actually gone mad? (laughs)

DWH: Could you tell me a little about your personal mythology and some of its images, like the horse and the phoenix and the skulls, and your use of colour?

MO: I'm originally from a farm, so I grew up with domestic animals around all the time. And even since I've gotten married, we've kept a small farm; my wife and I raise horses. So it's sort of natural that I use animals. I see the horse in particular as a large, powerful animal, but these racehorses are incredibly weak at the same time. I see them as alter egos for the human being, with all of our vast power and vast technology, and at the same time, incredible weaknesses. So the horse becomes the alter ego for myself. The first animal imagery I used was the minotaur image, where the minotaur became a sort of self-portrait. I did quite a number of drawings based on that. I also did my first performance piece ever, where I made a minotaur mask and wandered around — it was a very structuralist piece — I just wandered around the streets of Winnipeg. There's always been that sort of acceptance of animals as part of my life.



Mask for **The Dance of the Gigantic**

DWH: The minotaur image would have been interesting to juxtapose with something like your piece in the cave.

MO: Yeah, but I had envisioned that piece as somewhat low-key, not too many effects in it. Originally I wasn't even going to bang the sticks together. In the end, I did use a little bit of facial paint though. I have a totemic colour system worked out; I use red and white, and natural colours. I used a little bit of red under the eyes, and white on the face, but the main reason I used white on my face was to catch the candlelight.

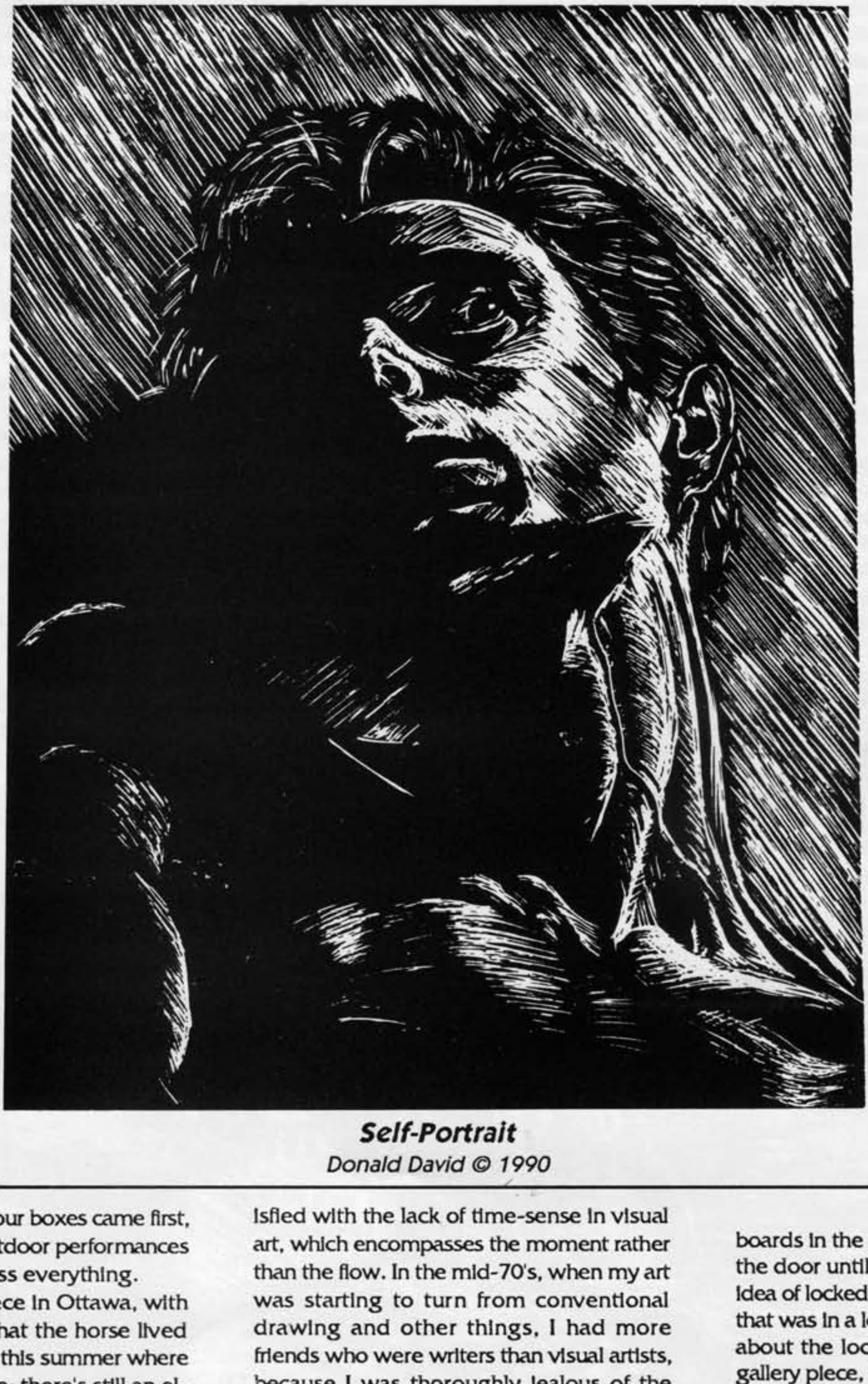
DWH: What's the symbolism behind that?

MO: Do you know [Canadian poet] Andy Suknaski? I used to do Christmas conceptual art exchanges with him, and one of the earlier ones involved sending poles [small totems] to him, and two more to a friend of ours in Louisiana. I wanted to paint them, and as I was working on them, *I was thinking that all art is based on the energy of nature.* But it's not art by itself; the energy of nature needs to be worked on by the blood-passion of the artist. But that's not enough either; you just get energy and chaos that way. It needs to be controlled by the aesthetic rules of art. So I devised this system where the unpainted section represents the energies of nature, the red section represents the blood-passion of the artist, and the white is the aesthetics and control of art. Not every time, but most of the time, the unpainted and red sections are surrounded by the white. That became my colour-lan-

guage. That's why you see the red and white stones in the cave, and all the sticks & stones that people hit together in the Gallery.

DWH: I was wondering about your boxes this morning while I was looking at a book on Joseph Cornell. Do you still do boxes?

MO: Actually, I'm doing a show in Regina, at a commercial gallery, which is sort of a strange departure for me, and I'm working on a portrait box for a friend of mine. So I still do them once in a while. There are two new sculptures I made for that show; one is a portrait within a box, but it has outside elements. The other was going to be put in a box, but I decided it stood better without a box. It still intrigues me, that whole feeling of the box. The ambiguity of any wall as a prison wall, or a fence.



Self-Portrait
Donald David © 1990

DWH: It seemed interesting to me, the way your boxes came first, and then these huge outdoor performances that seem to encompass everything.

MO: Although like the piece in Ottawa, with the 40' long palisade that the horse lived in, or the one I'm doing this summer where you go into the palisade; there's still an element of going into a trap/defense.

The process of moving from boxes to performance itself might interest you, because the boxes came out of many thousands of collages; I was obsessed for years by collage-making. I was making a collage one day and I thought, "Well, it doesn't have to be on one plane," so I got a pane of glass and put it between the elements. That was just two levels, but it grew from there, to the point where actual objects could be put in. I've never been satisfied with the two elements of conventional art. I was never satisfied with the lack of time-sense in visual art, which encompasses the moment rather than the flow. In the mid-70's, when my art was starting to turn from conventional drawing and other things, I had more friends who were writers than visual artists, because I was thoroughly jealous of the time-sense you get in writing. Writing exists in time, not only when you're doing it, but in your perception of it, when you're reading it. So I would do a collage where I would write on the collage — fragments of poetry and so on — seeking for that time-sense. I actually made books of different pictures that you went through in sequence. Of course it eventually resolved itself into performance.

DWH: Your prison piece in the gallery — **But We Are All Captives** — when you have a piece like that where the viewer can actually go inside the art and handle it; is that a step toward getting the time-sense?

MO: That piece was actually a throwback, it was formulated back in those times I was talking about, when I first started doing boxes. However I thought it was a valid statement, and I hadn't had the chance to do it in an exhibition space. That show was parallel with **Earth-Dialogue/Earth-Sound**, which I sort of saw as my present art, and the other show was the art leading up to it.

DWH: Have you made any other boxes that the viewer can actually manipulate and change?

MO: I was into weapons for awhile, when I did the piece in Ottawa with the horse. Shortly after that I made a box called **Driftstick**. The viewer opens it and finds a sort of Indian tomahawk-thing made out of driftwood. But it's all segmented and he has to put it together himself I had another one with a locked door, there were many small drawers and cupboards in the box, and you couldn't unlock the door until you found the key. I like the idea of locked boxes. I made a walking stick that was in a locked box; there's something about the lock holding in the magic. The gallery piece, that prison one, was nice. The viewer was locked in by someone else. It raised a whole different aspect of gallery exhibits, because the viewers weren't really in control of the situation. Although according to the rules of the gallery, they had to be let out if they requested to be. We had an interesting discussion before I built the piece in there. We decided the viewer had to agree to go in for a certain amount of time, in the interests of the gallery not being sued. Even if it was just an illusion, they were in fact imprisoned for that time.

DWH: I know you do some work with other artists, how does that process of collabo-

ration work?

MO: Most of the things that I've done with other artists have been basically my pieces, that they've helped me on. And I've done the reverse, helped other artists with their pieces, but I haven't done any true collaborations. Many of the artists I work with aren't visual artists. Some of them are writers, some are musicians. Sometimes I'll have people help me do pieces who aren't artists at all.

I'm doing a piece next March with a friend of mine that **is** going to be a true collaboration, and it'll be interesting to see how that works. This is a piece we're doing in Main Access Gallery, called **Yggdrasil**. He's a fellow from St. Catherine's, Ontario called Peter Gibson. I stayed with him while I was there and we became good friends. The piece is based on the Norse myth of the World-Ash that's rotten from the inside. He's going to cut down a 35' Ash tree, segment it, dig up the roots, segment them too, label them all, and the tree will be shipped down here. We're going to reassemble it in the Main Access Gallery with the roots and bottom part of the trunk growing up through the office space there, and all the branches in the Floating Gallery above, and then play off the theme of the wounded, dislocated, and then healed tree. There's going to be photography, drawings, sculpture, the installation itself, and various performances. We'll examine healing personal burdens and that sort of stuff.

He did a performance once after his wife ran away with his brother-in-law, which was a traumatic thing. He filled four bags with sand, and joined them with copper wires. He put one set over each shoulder and pulled them back and forth, lacerating himself to the bone. He has video documentation of it, and it might be part of the new piece — we'd pair that with the sawing and segmenting of the tree as almost a hurting to heal. It's like what they do at the racetrack when a horse has a minor injury; they'll blister or pin-fire it. They stick hot pins in the leg, and the body healing heals the other injury as well. You go through a purging thing; you intentionally injure yourself to heal a greater wound. Actually, much of my art is based on that idea, facing up to a thing in my life which I can hardly bear. When I do a performance piece, it speaks directly of these things. And I hope that if I do it properly, the observer will be healed in the same way that I am healed.

DWH: I find that interesting, because there are so many artists now who are into the mutilation and scarification of their bodies.

MO: There's a line between where that's a healing thing and a self-deprecation. I'm not into self-deprecation, and my friend wasn't either. It's impossible to talk about without seeing it, and knowing where it crosses lines and where it doesn't. I thought it was very important that he went very close, but didn't cross that line.

Another person whose art I admire quite a lot is Chris Burdon, a California artist. He had himself shot in the arm. He did another piece where he lay down on a busy Los Angeles freeway with a tarpaulin on him and four 15-minute flares on the tarpaulin. The assumption was that he'd get picked up by the police before the flares burned out and he got run over. Of course he was [picked up by the police], but again, he was out on that edge. I've seen performances and documentation of other things that were hard on the artist and involved mutilation that just didn't work. It becomes a morbid thing. The best pieces I've done have been generated out of great feelings of personal despair, like when I smashed that horse mask. But the more I worked on building the mask, the other side came through because of the energy that develops when working on a piece of art. You realize that you can't just smash the thing; there has to be a countermovement — the beautiful wings rising up from the rubble.



The Angel Donald David © 1990

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MIKE OLITO, BIOGRAPHY:

1942: Born, Woking, England. (Father in Canadian Army)

1945: Family moved to farm near MacGregor, Manitoba.

1962: Finished high school at MacGregor.

1963: Graduated from Manitoba Teacher's College, Winnipeg.

1963-69: Taught school for two years alternative with attending University of Manitoba.

1969: Graduated from University of Manitoba, School of Art with B.F.A.. Taught school Riverton, Manitoba.

1970-72: Worked at art.

1972-73: Taught school Shilo, Manitoba.

1974: Won first prize for painting, M.S.A. Jury Show, Winnipeg Art Gallery, William Ronald Juror.

1974-77: Worked for Versatile Manufacturing, Winnipeg, as a scheduler.

1977: Progress of the Minotaur performance, Winnipeg streets.

Manitoba Arts Council, Junior Grant.

Exhibited one sculpture, Arts Council Awards Show, Archives Building, Winnipeg.

Exhibited two sculptures, group show, Janet Ian Cameron Gallery, University of Manitoba.

Thorgler's Bull, painting acquired by St. John's College, U. of M., Winnipeg.

1978: Island Link, installation near Gimli, Manitoba.

One man show, Fleet Gallery, Winnipeg.

Homage to Jackson Pollack, sculpture, purchased by St. John's College, University of Manitoba.

1979: Manitoba Arts Council Senior Grant.

Acting president CAR/FAC, Manitoba.

Section Link, installation near MacGregor, Manitoba.

1980: Totemic Execution, performance and resultant sculpture, eventually purchased by Gallery III, University of Manitoba.

1980-83: Worked for an insulation contractor.

1984: Earth Dialogue ongoing performance and documentation near St. Norbert, Manitoba.

Dance of the Gigantic, performance, Shared Stage, Cardigan/Milne Gallery, Winnipeg.

Phoenix, performance, Shared Stage, Royal Albert Hotel, Winnipeg.

Manitoba Arts Council Senior Grant.

1985: Rites of Passage, performance, Shared Stage, Royal Albert Hotel, Winnipeg.

Canada Council, B Grant, and travel allowance, Iceland.

Dawnscreen, sculptural installation and photographic documentation at four sites in Manitoba.

1986: Earth-Dialogue/Earth-Sound, performance and one man show, Winnipeg Art Gallery.

But We Are All Captives, installation and one man show, Gallery III, University of Manitoba.

Stealing Their Magic, conceptual landscape performance linking two sites in Iceland with two in Manitoba.

15 minute television documentary produced by Videon Manitoba for their series, **The Artists.**

1987: Cachetero, performance, Forest City Gallery, London Ontario, and Artcite, Windsor, Ontario.

Manitoba Arts Council, Project and Travel Grant, Ottawa.

Sanctuary and the Presence of Despair, installation, and **Mythic Defense System**, performance, Richmond Landing, Ottawa, Ontario, for S.A.W. Gallery.

Ritual of Horses, 1/2 hour documentary by Manitoba Educational Television, later shown on CBC National T.V..

1988: The Sentinel, outdoor installation in Parc du Bic, Quebec, for the show ***L'Artiste au Jardin,*** Musee Regional de Rimouski.

1989: Workshop for Niagara Artist's Centre, St. Catherines, Ontario.

Guardians of the Circle, installation and workshop with schoolchildren, Little Saskatchewan, Manitoba.

Mantra for Little Saskatchewan, performance and video.

Manitoba Arts Council, Senior Grant.

Artist-in-Residency, three months, for Projects U.K., Newcastle Upon Tyne, England.

Earth Encounter, installation and performance, two sites near Newcastle, England.

1990: May 17-June 12, one man show of drawings, prints and sculptures, Susan Whitney Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan.

June 1990: Night Ceremony, outdoor installation and performance, near MacGregor, Manitoba, for Gallery III, School of Art, University of Manitoba.

Upcoming

March1991: Joint show with Peter Gibson, Main Access Gallery, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Kitchen activism aims to save the world

(**Edmonton Journal**) Washing soda and mild soap may not get her clothes "cleaner than clean" or "brighter than bright," but that doesn't bother Ann Conlin.

"You might not have absolutely sparkling clean clothes now, but we're working on improving the environment," the St. Albert resident said during a seminar at the Strathcona Community League hall on hazardous household wastes.

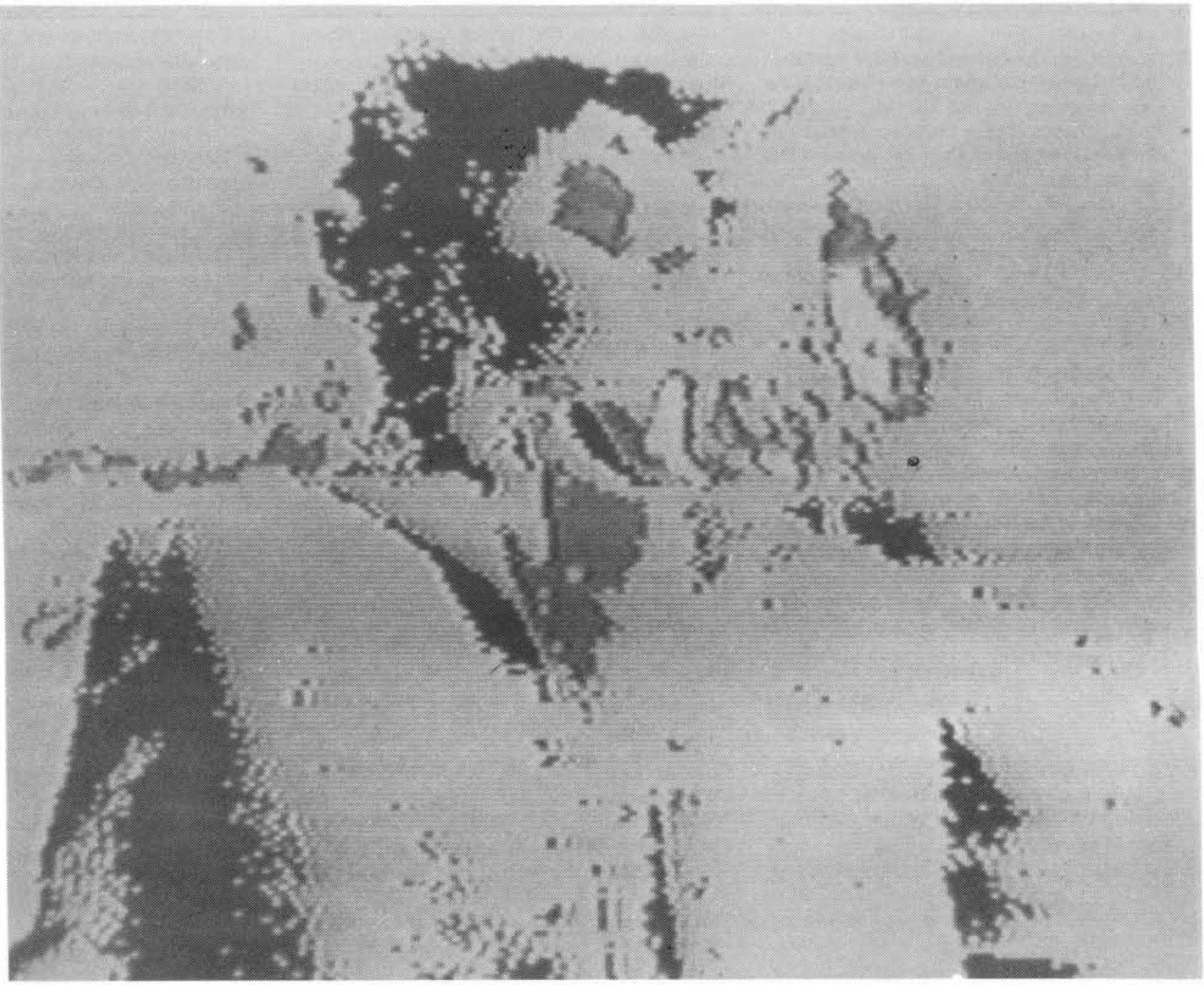
Conlin is one of the converted- those who have begun changing some old and ingrained habits to help protect the environment. For her and about 70 other community representatives from northern Alberta and B.C., their mission is to go back to their cities and towns and preach the household environmental gospel. That means convincing people to use washing soda and soap instead of detergent cleaners containing phosphates.

Brian Staszenski of Edmonton's Environmental Resource Centre (433-4808), which organized the seminar, said by training community leaders to teach the public, it quenches the enormous public thirst for environmental information. For the most part, Staszenski, Conlin and the others will be trying to help people identify what can be hazardous, show them how to dispose it, and suggest environmentally-friendly alternatives.

For example, baking soda -a biodegradable, non-toxic product- can be used as an oven, toilet, drain, jewelry, vinyl and upholstery cleaner, as well as a fabric softener, fire extinguisher and toothpaste. Cornstarch can be used to clean windows, polish furniture and shampoo carpets. Lemon juice can be used to clean windows and other glass. Water-based paint should be used over oil-based paint so you don't have to use paint thinners and turpentine to clean the brushes.

"That's one of the things I find shocking, is how much we rely on chemicals," said Staszenski's colleague, Jocelyn Babcock. "Maybe we have to question our attitudes toward cleanliness, because I think we've become obsessed with disinfecting and killing germs, sometimes in situations when it's not necessary."

cutting edge new age



By Bruce Fletcher

I recently attended a "psychic fair" here in Edmonton and ran into a very interesting guy who calls himself Trinatron. Normally, I don't have much use for the whole "New Age" phenomenon. They usually strike me as either misdirected loveypeacey flower people who can't seem to handle extreme information, banal con artists who hawk pyramids & crystals and will sell you six of your past lives for fifty bucks, or way-far-out-on-the-edgers who may or may not be onto something but can't seem to communicate whatever that is to me in any form other than utterly incomprehensible pseudo-religious metaphors. But preconceptions are meant to be shattered right!

Well, Trinatron did that all right. He sucked me right in, and I haven't had this much fun for a long time. Play the Reality Selection game with these guys and you're playing with the big boys, because for pure apocalyptic vision on a universal scale this stuff can't be beat. It makes every other conspiracy and/or universal connectedness theory that I've ever run across (and I've seen some doozies) pale in comparison. But Trinatron himself impressed me greatly when I met him. He's obviously an info junkie and he applauds critical thought, and really that's enough for me. He had a small selection of books for sale in front of the table where he did readings. This information included newsletters, pamphlets, and an assortment of books, from ***Borderland Sciences*** *and Klark Kent's* ***Super Science*** *stuff to* ***The Phoenix Journals*** *(an extremely controversial series in these circles). I actually bought one of these called* ***Cry of the Phoenix: Death Rattle of Freedom - "The Plan 2000"*** *by Gyeorgos Ceres Hatonn, and it was definitely an eye-opening experience. Trinatron currently publishes a really cool newsletter called* ***Advance Guard*** *(I received #8 on May 23rd), and the* ***Living Flame Books Catalog*** *which is jam-packed with obscure information. Trinatron has access to an incredible variety of very stimulating and very current material in the same vein, some of the newsletters he networks with (and provides addresses for) are even updated weekly. No slack-assed hippy-dippy retrogressor he! Twenty bucks should get you on the mailing list for a long time. His address is at the end of this article, and should you subscribe please mention our name for his data-flow control.*

I reprint the following article from his newsletter, ***Advance Guard*** *(#7, Spring 1990), it's a very nice jump into the deep end of the philosophies (which are many and varied I might add) of this system of thought:*

Emerald Lake Galactic Conference of Federated Free worlds Phase 1. 28 dedicated commanders went to Emerald Lake this last X-mas and had a very wonderful time. The Family of Ra received a lot of wonderful information and learned how to sit at a conference table all day. It certainly wasn't the same as trucking around the pyramids and temples but we learned more of who we are and why we are here. We learned about the many different SuperUniverses/ Omniverses that there are, the Nature of this Local Universe, Quantum physics, Paradise Creators, Trinitized Lords, the Interdimensional Alliance, a lot more about Operation Victory, Starseed/ Human perspectives, the Five Planetary Grids, a profile of Grid Engineer/ Commanders, Urantia, and learned how to adapt to a changing world. We also recited the Galactic Codes, the Articles of Peace, and the Universal Principles of Constitutionality & Precepts of Law Governing the membership of **New Earth/ Plantavia** within the Galactic Confederation of Free Worlds as the newest member thereof in the solar system, the RA-UM VECTOR. We had a round table Configuration Ceremony to initiate the advanced leadership within the Sacred Trinity of "Z", the ZOHAR RACES OF LIGHT. We did many wonderful ceremonies, learned how to work together, and most of all we learned how to be at peace with ourselves and why we are here on this world. Of course we also got to enjoy the beauty of Emerald Lake and all that it had to offer. For those of us that went X-country skiing around the lake and under Michael's Peak, the beauty and stillness was very incredible. There was skating, sleigh rides, fireplace parties, and just plain relaxing. Although some got to experience the wonderful influenza that was going around and that really slowed them down to a crawl. Overall the work got done at many levels and will continue much stronger because of it.... Next newsletter I will hopefully have the transcript from Emerald Lake and many other books to offer those of you who are interested in learning a lot more about the work as we perceive it to be.

Emerald Lake really opened my eyes to a lot of the energy that is going on on this world these days. It seems we try so hard to get the work done and then there are those that put energy against us. We had most of the staff at Emerald Lake considering us to be a cult of some kind. Although there are always some who are there because they need to meet us and be enlightened. No matter who is there they still get to feel and experience the Love that we had to share with them. Then of course we had to deal with the unseen ones who were throwing our energies this way and that. We experienced many different feelings towards one another and that was fuelled from some of these energies. We were always prepared for these ones when we are on the trips, but we didn't expect them at Emerald lake. We learned to be prepared at all times because as we do the work and our light grows there are those who wish to disrupt us from our tasks. How many times have those of us who have come to this world been persecuted for what we have tried to do. How many of us have been shot, hung, burned at the stake, and just plain run out of town for our Universal Beliefs. We have essentially come to this planet to be sacrificed many times over, not that we really planned it that way. Well they can judge us and condemn us but they can't get rid of us because we are here in numbers and we will not leave until the Mission is complete. We Love what we do and it is with this same Love that we will persevere to the Completion of this Mission and the Ascension of the Human.

I will be on the Fair circuit with DPE Psychic Fairs.... This time around I will be doing readings at the fair along with selling some items up front. My main objective this time is to give information to those who are at this level of understanding and need awakening or enlightenment for their work to be much smoother. Other than one [psychic] reader that I know of there is not really anyone who will address those of us who are into the Heirarchy and the Command. Many come to the fairs to find those who are interested in UFOlogy, Spirituality, Inner Earth, Radionics, the Trillads, and just plain weird stuff. [No kidding. -ed.] I will be doing a lot of conscious readings and channelings but I also hope to do more in-depth session work after each fair for those who wish more awakening and Light Body Work. Hope to see some of you on the circuit and if not, do keep in touch as it is getting pretty wild out there these days and keep the faith as the reality of it all is that we created this world and we can fix it.

So last but not least I would like to give all of you my love, a big hug and a hearty Hallelujah for all of your efforts. We cannot do this alone and that is why so many of us are here. We came here because of a calling. A calling came for assistance to the Human. We came because we serve and we wished to serve the Human and give them one last chance to ascend and join us in God's World, the higher dimensions. Whatever you perceive it to be it shall be. If you believe that you can ascend then you shall. If you believe that you are an Ascended Master then you are. Believing it to be and Working at it will make all of our Dreams and Hopes come True. There are only so many of us but the numbers are strong and together we can make all of our plans come to fruition. It is with this Love that we unite all of the races on this Planet that is Earth and has so many other names but most of all it is one of our Mothers. It has resided here and waited for us to come back. This Mother has the biggest heart and shows the greatest care in our well-being. She will be ready when we are but first she will vent some of her anger and constitute some change. As to how drastic this change at a third dimensional level will be, will be up to her but whatever she decides to do will be her right and no one may judge her. She is the Master of the next while and her change will be our change as well. We are all in this together and it will all work out for the best. Those that oppose us will join us and together we will be the Greater Light again. The Earth Mother says "We shall do this together because together none shall stand in our way." Till next time!

IN LOVE AND IMMENSE LIGHT- TRINATRON

If you want to investigate further, write to Trinatron: c/o Living Flame Productions, Suite 52, 10024-82nd Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6E 1Z3.

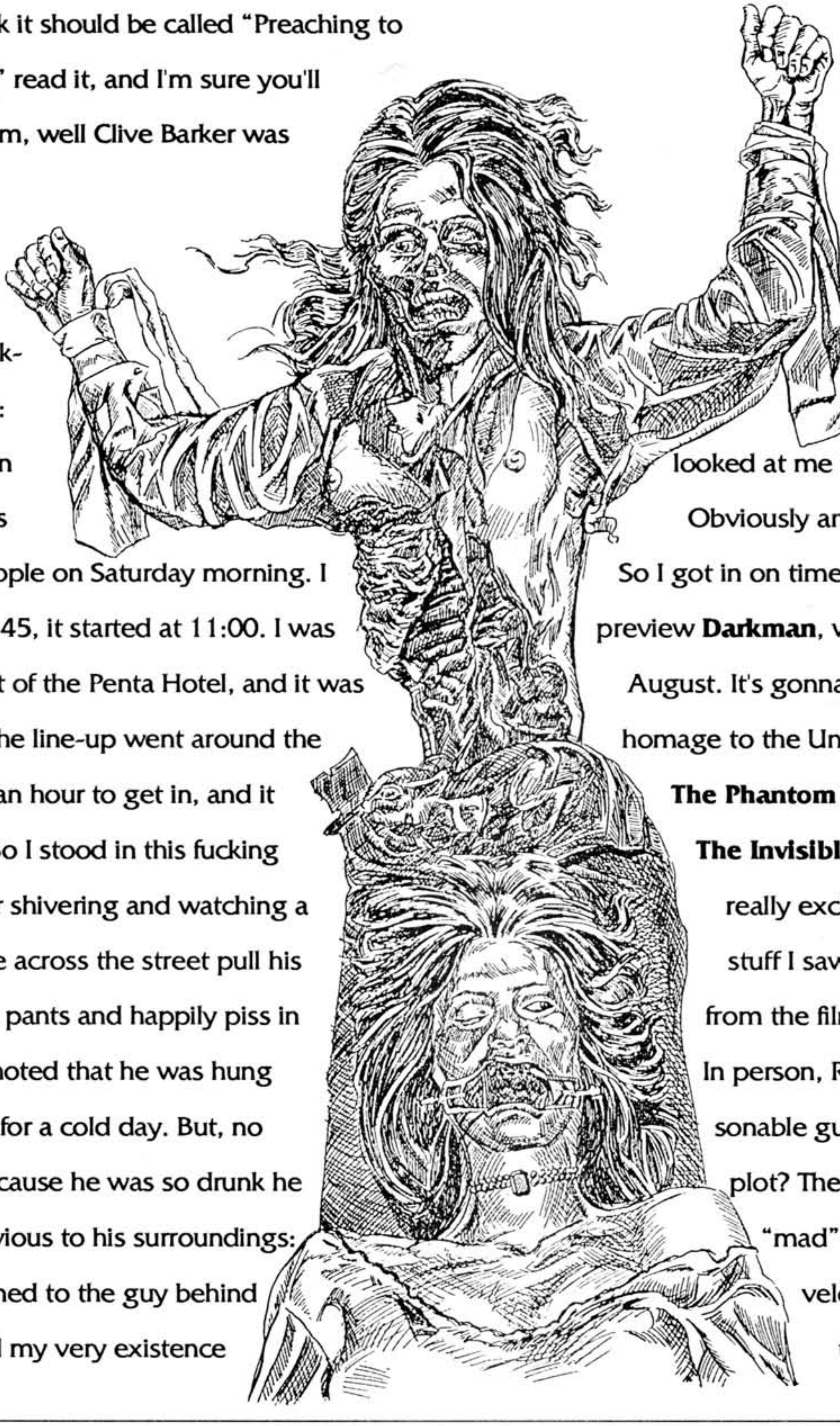
Executions may cause air pollution

SAN FRANCISCO (Reuter)— California state officials are worried executions may be a health hazard.

State air-quality authorities want assurances from San Quentin prison, site of California's only gas chamber, that executions of prisoners will not pollute the air.

The San Francisco Bay Area Quality Control Board said it has asked prison officials for information on possible danger to the public from cyanide gas released through a chimney after each execution.

Preaching to the Perverted:
Correspondence from Donald David in New York



Dear A.D.o.S.A.,

Here it is. I think it should be called "Preaching to the Perverted," read it, and I'm sure you'll agree. Hmmm, well Clive Barker was booked solid, and the convention [**Fangoria**'s Weekend of Horrors: January 20-21 in New York] was wall-to-wall people on Saturday morning. I got there at 10:45, it started at 11:00. I was standing in front of the Penta Hotel, and it was raining. Fuck. The line-up went around the corner. It took an hour to get in, and it cost $18.00! So I stood in this fucking line for an hour shivering and watching a homeless dude across the street pull his cock out of his pants and happily piss in the gutter. I noted that he was hung pretty good for a cold day. But, no doubt, that's because he was so drunk he was totally oblivious to his surroundings: lucky him! I turned to the guy behind me, who hated my very existence because I was ahead of him in the line, just as I hated everyone in front of me. I said, "There's some horror for you." He grunted and looked at me like I was a pervert. Obviously an out-of-towner.

So I got in on time to see Sam Raimi preview **Darkman**, which comes out in August. It's gonna be great. It's an homage to the Universal classics like **The Phantom of the Opera**, and **The Invisible Man**, etc.. Looks really exciting anyway. The stuff I saw was the first stuff from the film shown anywhere. In person, Raimi is a really personable guy: Really funny. The plot? The main character is a "mad" scientist who's developing a liquid-skin type formula to re

generate burn victims. He eventually has to use the skin on his own face, 'cause the bad guys blow him up. So he uses it to copy other faces in order to infiltrate the Mob and wreak his vengeance. The problem? He can only be in the light with the liquid-skin for a short time before it degenerates and melts off, hence the title. There's a bit of **The Shadow** thrown in there too, especially the look of his hat and cloak.

Also, because he was so badly burned, the doctors severed his nervous system or something like that. So his body produces an abundance of adrenaline which makes him prone to rages, increases his strength, and he can feel no pain, not physical at least: (sob, my poor monster). The Darkman's a monster with a soul crying to come out and regain his humanity, I love this shit. All this info, a two and a half minute trailer, plus a spectacular lab explosion! Raimi has a great flair for comic-book dynamics on film. "Crime has a new enemy and justice has a new face!"- How can I resist a great tagline like that? Or this, "In the darkest hour there's a light that shines on every human being, but one; The Darkman." It was also very well received by the crowd.

He also talked about **Evil Dead 3**, which he fondly calls "Medieval Dead," because it takes off where **Evil Dead 2** ended. Bruce Campbell will play Ash again. Sam says this film's going to be scary instead of slapstick black comedy like **2**. As he says, "I don't know kids, even this morning I was working on the script. Ash is down in a pit, he's surrounded, and his chainsaw's out of gas. I don't know, things don't look very good for Ash." I got to meet Raimi and Campbell (the Legend) for a few seconds in the autograph line. It's weird seeing Bruce like that, he's nine feet tall in the movies. Anyway...

Gunnar Hansen talked next. He's not doing much these days. It sort of bothered me that they brought him for this convention, because he indirectly promoted **Leatherface**, the piece of shit. Those insidious marketing people are thinking all the time, but they don't have me fooled. Good to see him though. He's a big, burly gentleman who looks and acts like Grizzly Adams. However, you'll be happy to know that when the Fango geek came on to promote **Leatherface**, the audience got really outraged and he couldn't even get finished. Everyone hated it. Maybe they'll wise up, but I doubt it.

Then the very cute Linnea Quigley took the stage. The Scream Queen. Everyone howled and begged her to take her leather jacket off. She's looking very much like an L.A. metal queen, perhaps because that's where she's from! In her twenty-odd films, she's been stabbed, impaled, raped and skinned [and she inserted a lipstick tube into her breast through her nipple once too -ed.]. Her favorite role was



Linnea Quigley — Scream Queen

Trash, the death-obsessed punk in **The Return of the Living Dead**. It was mine too. Nice breasts. Apparently Dan O'Bannon, the director, made her wear a sort of weird body stocking for her lower body. I always thought her anatomy looked a little weird in that film.

Next up was the unsurpassed Tom Savini, in all his gory glory. He brought some props from **Two Evil Eyes** a Dario Argento/George Romero film. I certainly hope they change the crummy title. The upper body [in the picture] is from Dario's half of the film, it's sort of a mismash of Edgar Allan Poe stories called "The Black Cat." She gets eaten by killer pussies. If you look closely you can see a dead kitten in her torso. The lower body is from Romero's story, "The Truth about the Valdemar Case," in which Savini plays a psycho who yanks out her teeth (I think). Savini also talked about his plans for the **Night of the Living Dead** remake, to allay everyone's fears no doubt. He said he and George want to re-invent the zombies. No longer call them zombies even. Somehow they want to make them scarier because, well... zombies are *passe* because of Michael Jackson. The script has all new twists and turns. A cameo by an actor from the original is apparently going to be used in some clever way, which Savini refused to reveal. The character of Barbara becomes much stronger in this version as well. Savini also said that the point of view for the zombies (for lack of a better word) will be in black and white, as a sort of homage to the original.

The big question is: why remake that which is still powerful? Well, basically it's Romero's way of re-instating his ownership of the property. In addition, it has a different twist at the end, and it's been changed so it's relevant to the '90's, not the '60's.

I asked him what era the film would take place in, because I wondered if it was to be treated as a prequel to **Dawn** and **Day of the Dead.** He looked stunned and said, "Gee, I'll have to ask George about that...." He thought it will be set in the present. I guess it's not that important a detail; but it would be cool to see it happen in the '50's. Elvis zombies?

Next up was Christopher Lee, whose presence and grace filled the audience with awe. The guy looks fucking great for seventy-five! He just completed **Gremlins 2** with Joe Dante and it looks, well... good, I guess. Rick Baker did the FX for the new evil gremlins, so they look a lot more realistic. I just cringed when this obese woman in an Elvira costume saw Gizmo and gushed, "Awwww, isn't he cute." Anyway, Lee looks great. He told us that Peter Cushing has been sick, but is on the mend and would like to do some acting now. Vincent Price is also doing well. Both are men of "indomitable spirits." He was asked which film is his personal favourite, of those he's starred in. He replied, "No question, **The Wicker Man.**" He referred to most of his films

as "atrocious," which they are in a way. He said the worst line he was ever asked to utter was, "I am the apocalypse." He was playing Dracula, so he just remained silent in the film. He also commented that **Dracula** has never been adapted faithfully from Bram Stoker's original.

And finally, last but not least, Clive Barker came on. Since **Nightbreed** has already been released I edited the **Nightbreed** stuff out of the bootlegged interview tacked on the end of this. Although I would have really liked to ask him some stuff, such was not to be. I was part of the crowd, but I fired off a couple of questions from the floor. However, he did cover quite a lot of the stuff that I would have asked him anyway.

To top it off, I had to behave like a common criminal. You see, those Fango boys weren't allowing taping. Actually, I felt pretty devious in there. I was wired with a bug, the mike was carefully hidden up my sleeve and the Walkman was in my chest pocket. [There's no stopping a determined person with access to personal electronics- ed.]

Eventually, I did get to say a few words to him. But he was very busy, because the crowds were so bad, and he was booked solid in New York promoting **Nightbreed** and **The Great and Secret Show**. I went to the autograph session. So there I was, the last person in line to get my books signed by Clive. My covert audiotapes were filled, so I couldn't have taped anything else anyway. [The only thing stopping a determined person with access to personal electronics is not having enough equipment. Heed the Scouts: "Be Prepared."- ed.] Clive looked pretty tired by that point, he's good to his fans though. Anyhow, as I said I was at the end of the queue, because people were lining up to get his autograph before he'd even finished speaking. So when he was done I went over to the line-up. It went on and on forever. This fucking convention started with a ridiculously long line, and it was going to end with one as well. I was the last person in line, what could I possibly ask him? I knew he'd be right out the door as soon as he signed my books. But I had my special "Intended for Clive Barker" copy of **Virus 23** out, and I was ready to present it to him. Then I wondered, "Would he remember me from two years ago when he was in Calgary signing **Weaveworld**?" I'd showed him my portfolio that day, but somehow I forgot to try that stunt again. [See previous note-ed.] After the fact, my mentor/teacher Marshal Arisman, reprimanded me quite severely for not trying. So I thought, "Oh well, my image is on the front cover of the magazine, maybe that'll trigger a response...." Besides, I can't blame him for forgetting, especially after all the times he's signed his name. My copy of **Weaveworld** has



Clive Barker in New York

a drawing he did in the front, but it's buried at my parent's house under boxes and boxes of books. On with the story, the guy ahead of me (whom I hated because he was ahead of me) laid down a stack of Clive's comics. Clive just looked at him and said, "Choose your two favourites and I'll sign them, otherwise I'll go bananas."

Great. Now he's pissed.

DON: Hi Clive. *They shake hands and Don slides his copy of* ***Cabal*** *across the table.*

CLIVE: And your name is?

DON: Don. Look, I've brought this magazine for you. It's published in Red Deer, Alberta, Canada. I did the cover.'

CLIVE: Very nice. Why 23? Or is that the issue number?

DON: No, it's some reference to a William S. Burroughs piece... I'm not sure. Just promise me you'll put down **Moby Dick** for awhile and have a look at it will ya?

CLIVE: Sure, anything else you want me to sign?

DON: How about my buttocks? Naw, just kidding. Thanks Clive.

At this point I thought I saw a glimmer of recognition, which was suddenly interrupted by **Fangoria** editor Tony Timpone.

TONY: Well that's it Clive, we can get out of here.

CLIVE: Thank Christ.

And off they went.

THE SOMEWHAT SLIGHTLY EDITED TRANSCRIPT OF THE COVERT INFO GATHERING SESSION

Clive answers questions about **Nightbreed** for awhile, then takes questions from the floor.

QUESTION-ASKER: What do you like to read?

CLIVE BARKER: I read a lot of the classics. I'm reading Melville's **Moby Dick** at the moment, which I think is a wonderful and scary novel. I read a lot of children's literature, the Brother's Grimm, happy-go-lucky stuff like that where people get burned at the stake. I read a lot of research books. I'm researching now for a big book and I'm reading a whole bunch of stuff in support of that.

QA: What sort of music do you like?

CB: I listen to just about anything. I have a very eclectic collection. When I'm making a movie, I tend to listen to soundtracks exclusively. When I'm writing I'll listen to just about anything. At the moment I'm listening to the soundtrack to **The Little Mermaid**, and if you believe that, you'll believe anything.

QA: What's your favorite anatomy book? **Gray's Anatomy**?

CB: I have it, don't we all? But it's not my favourite anatomical book because they're all drawings. I prefer photographs. There is a wonderful collection available, a sort of "skinned book." We shot a scene from **Nightbreed** in a real mortuary which ap-

pears in the movie. The crew were very very reverential when they came in. They thought I was a sick fuck for wanting to shoot there. I said, "No No, we want to get the flavour of the place." The pathologist's assistant was this lady who looked like a Charles Addams cartoon. She was standing there with this gray face and gray eyes. So eventually I said, "I have to ask because you don't look very happy; why do you work in a mortuary?" She said, "Do you really want to know?" I said, "Yes I really want to know," and she says, "I'm morbid." Anyway, we were shooting in this place with coffins and everything. Halfway through the day, a human leg is brought in. You've never seen so many grown technicians run for their lives shouting, "It's a leg! Oh my God, it's a leg!" One of the actors, playing the pathologist's assistant passed out. It was just a great experience.

QA: Which of the **Books of Blood** do you consider your favourite?

CB: Number four. I don't know why, I think because its got "The Age of Desire" in it. It's a dirty little story... autobiographical.

QA: Did you get your knowledge of Baphomet and other demons, from the writing of Aleister Crowley?

CB: Actually, I got my knowledge of Baphomet from the Knights Templar. Do you know them? They were burned at the stake... (The lights dim and brighten again) Is God in the room or something? Anyway, I got my knowledge of Baphomet from stories of the Knights Templar, who were burned at the stake for their worship. Apparently Baphomet is still mentioned within some present-day Masonic rituals.

QA: What were you like as a child? Were you demented?

CB: Was I demented when I was a child? Yes. You know, my kind of dementia is other people's sanity. Who knows? It seems to me that we're all gathered here because we like crazy stuff, right? So I figure our kind of craziness is a kind of sanity. I have a theory. I think the people who repress the kinds of ideas we like are the sick ones. (applause) Seriously! Do you know where the devil comes from, where the images of the devil come from? They were pagan images that were turned into negative images by Christians. We all know our basic theology right? What we have to look at... we have to get those pagan gods back, because those guys are pretty good.

QA: Are you interested in continuing the **Nightbreed/Cabal** characters?

CB: Yes. There will be more **Nightbreed** movies and more **Cabal** books. Absolutely. One of the things I'm really interested in is the idea of building a whole mythology. That's happening with the **Hellraiser** series, it's going to happen with **The Great and Secret Show**, and it's going to happen with the **Cabal** stuff. I love the idea that instead of these things being arbitrary activities..., because what happens in most horror books is that something invades the world, but you never quite know what the theology is, or what the story is about those invaders. I want to tell the stories about the invaders. I want to tell the stories about the monsters. (Suddenly a burst of feedback cuts through the speakers) God is here! He just farted.

The great thing about the monsters is that they're the characters that I, as a kid, always loved. I didn't go to monster movies to see the good guys, because good guys are boring. Can you imagine a movie called **Van Helsing**? Boring! Now for me, the whole thing about the mythology is that I want to learn more about these people. I want to know more, and so I want to expand the mythology.

Frank is being pulled apart, he smiles and licks his lips. The M.P.A.A. didn't like that.

QA: Can you tell me if "The Hellbound Heart" is in print anywhere?

CB: Yeah. That's an oft-asked question. It's in a collection called **Night Visions**, published in paperback by Berkeley.

QA: Are your plays published in anything? Will you do any more?

CB: We are preparing an edition which will be out soon. As far as stage and screen as concerned, I prefer the screen, because the screen is forever. I have a sign above my desk which reads "Now Means Forever." Whatever I do now is there forever you know? All the errors and compromises you make are there in perpetuity, which is a worrying thought sometimes.

QA: A lot of your stories deal with Faust archetypes, which version does yours come from?

CB: Marlowe's. Yeah, because Marlowe's has the bloodier ending. Marlowe's **Faustus** is the first time I ever encountered that particular mythology, and I love that story. There's a wonderful last act to that play, the main character ends up in bits and pieces. It's a splatter play, it's great. They pick up the pieces of Faustus at the end. There goes the head, there goes the arms, the dick....

QA: They say he was warped for what he wrote, do you think...

CB: Do I think I'm warped? NO! I think I'm an extremely healthy person. I don't trust analysts. Who here is an analyst? Who here goes to psychoanalysis? See what healthy people you are. Not an analyst in the room. That points to something. You're at peace with your imaginations. I think that when you repress stuff, you get sick. I think of myself as being very healthy.

QA: How much of **Nightbreed** did you lose to the M.P.A.A.?

CB: 4.5 seconds. We had 4 X's on it, and each time we'd send it back with two frames gone. It was great. My editor, Mark Goldblatt edited **The Terminator** and **Commando** [he also directed **Dead Heat**], so he's dealt with the M.P.A.A. quite a lot. He has a good relationship with them. You know the weird thing about the M.P.A.A. is that they're very nice people. That may be the problem. They're nice, ordinary people who think that this is just so perverse and so sick, and why would you ever want to do it? Somebody from the M.P.A.A. called me up and said, "You know, this is a really well-made movie. You make very good movies, but why do you want to make these kinds of movies?" I had to say, "Hey, it's the way my head works." I love it.

QA: What was cut from **Hellraiser**?

CB: Not very much, let me just remember.... Here's a funny thing; when Frank is being pulled apart, he smiles and licks his lips. The M.P.A.A. didn't like that, I think he still passes his dry tongue over part of his lips, but that was all. And they're funny about insertion. The M.P.A.A. hates things where I put things into other things. I'm sure there's nothing sexual about this. During the second murder, Frank puts his fingers into the guy's neck and they wouldn't allow me the insertion. There were a cou-



ple of other things. Did I tell you about the sex scene? They wouldn't allow me buttock thrusts, and some mild spanking in the sex scene was cut, but it was mild you know? Everybody does that. We'll all go home tonight and spank our loved ones; well I will.

QA: Do you expect to make a movie of **The Damnation Game**?

CB: There's been talk about it, but there's major censorship problems. At the moment I want stuff to be as raw as possible. I want the stuff on the page, and on film, to be as raw as each other. There's no doubt that there's real difficulties getting certain kinds of images on the screen at the moment. Maybe if things liberalize.... Yes, I've talked with people in Hollywood about making it. But, until such time as I know we can bring it to the screen in its full glory, I'm not going to do it. Maybe there'll come a time.

QA: Do you have any cinematic plans for "In the Flesh"?

CB: Yes. "In the Flesh" is with Warner Brothers at the moment, and there's a script halfway to being finished. I think there's a very good chance that it'll go before the camers before the end of the year. The problem, obviously, is going to be the M.P.A.A. again. But we'll see what happens.

QA: How much control will you have over future **Hellraiser** films?

CB: I won't be scripting. I would like to make sure the mythology is made more coherent and more cogent. I'd like people to begin to understand why all this happened. If I had done **Hellbound**, and I didn't and that's cool, I think my picture would have been more perverse than Tony's [Randel] was. I think I'm a perverse individual. I would have pushed the perversity rather more than he did.

QA: Where did you get the idea of Pinhead?

CB: Doug Bradley's wife [Bradley plays Pinhead in the **Hellraiser** films, and Lylesburg in **Nightbreed**] was doing a psychoanalysis course and she was studying classic images of rage from around the world. Doug called me up and said, "You'll have to come around and see something." In this book was a picture of a wooden carved head with nails all over it. It pointed out that this image was one which constantly comes up when people talked about rage in psychoanalysis. They talk about their heads being full of pins. Now, I've never done psychoanalysis, but my belief is that it plugged into something that's working in a lot of people's heads. It just made sense.

QA: Where do you get the courage to write about these taboo subjects?

CB: If it's the only thing you've got to sell, you have no real choice. My mind works in a certain kind of way. I've done a lot of meetings in Hollywood, and they've said, "You know, this idea is just too weird. You could make a lot more money if you just toned down this idea, and then you'll have it." My answer is always, "I'm sorry. This is the way that it is, this is the only way that my mind works. This stuff isn't so weird to me." You know what I'm saying? Don't you all have situations like that? You've got a copy of **Fangoria** or something, and a friend says, "Why do you read this stuff? Where does this stuff come from?" You have to say, "I like the stuff, it makes sense to me." So I don't have to have courage to get this stuff out there. It's all I've got to sell. If I'm a baker, I only bake.

QA: What do you think of the **Rawhead Rex** movie?

CB: I'm not a great fan of the **Rawhead Rex** movie. Y'see my book was about a nine-foot dick on the loose, and it never got made that way.

QA: Would you like to do a more faithful adaptation?

CB: Well, **Son of Rawhead Rex** maybe, or **Brother of Rawhead Rex**. Actually, I've seriously thought about that, because I hated the movie so much. Steve Bissette is doing it in comic book form, and I think it's going to kick ass.

QA: You say you want more control over how your ideas come out on film. So then, what happened to **Rawhead Rex**? How did you lose it?

CB: **Rawhead Rex** was the second picture I did. You know what happens with movies? People get starry-eyed. I got starry-eyed. "Boy! The Movies!" Your eyes get big like saucers, "They're going to make a movie of my story!" And then you realize that they don't really care. It's a slow thing. I think everybody who goes to Hollywood thinks, at first, that they mean you no harm and they genuinely want to make your vision, and so on. And they're very good at telling you, at convincing you, that they do want your vision. Then gradually you realize they couldn't give a fuck.

QA: What did you think of last year's genre films?

CB: I don't think that 1989 was a very good year for horror movies. It was a somewhat barren year. One of the things that's happened of late is that there's been a lot of repetitive sequels. I don't mind sequels if they break new ground and are the next chapter, but the recent sequels have all gone back to the old ground where it's safe. I'd like to think that in the future we could get into much more imaginative stuff. The cross-over between horror and fantasy and horror and science fiction has always been large. **Frankenstein**, one of the first horror books, is also arguably a science fiction book, and arguably a fantasy book. I would like to see more of that. I'm trying in my writing to make those kinds of cross-overs, to make sure that what I'm really writing is imaginative fiction. The word horror has very negative connotations to a lot of people. There's people out there who say, "Oh, it's a horror book, I won't read it," or "It's a horror movie, I won't see that." That's a very sort of reductionist way of looking at it. I think it's very important that we persuade people that this material has something to say, it has meaning! Which it does. Horror fiction is talking about obsession, death, perverse sexuality, fear and insanity. This is not polite material. I'd like to begin to make the fiction and the



Boris
Donald David © 1990

movies break through to the people and say that this stuff is valuable.

QA: Do you consider your books to be fantasy or horror?

CB: Here's a serious concern. I began making fiction which was just called horror fiction. **The Books of Blood** could not have been more clearly, or plainly horror fiction. What I want to be able to do, is to have people who feel good about horror fiction also feel good about a very dark, imaginative kind of fiction. They can feel that that's theirs as well. **Weaveworld** has some very disgusting sequences in it, but also a lot of fantasy. The terminology is very difficult, what is fantasy? I think the fantastical is in most horror fiction. Most of Edgar Allan Poe's stories, which are plainly horror stories, are also fantasy stories.

QA: Like Stephen R. Donaldson?

CB: Absolutely. You see, sometimes I think we get caught up in our own terminology. What publishers have to say, in order to sell to bookstores is, "That's a horror book, that's a science fiction book, or that's a fantasy book." Now we all know there are cross-overs between all these areas. But the publishers have to package them in a certain way, and put them on the shelves in a certain place. I have found wonderful, horrific things in science fiction books. So what I try to do is say, "This is all the *fantastique*, this is all works of the imagination."

QA: How would you compare and contrast your approach to horror with Stephen Kings'?

CB: I think my approach to horror is entirely different than Stephen Kings'. I think I'm often on the side of the corrupt, the perverse, and the morally dubious. Stephen King is on the side of the *status quo*. Generally speaking, I think that's where I'm coming from. I've always looked at myself as somebody who is the voice of the outsider. Now, in the **Hellraiser** pictures, this means that the monsters are more interesting than than the human beings. This is quite often the fact in horror pictures. In my writing, I try to get inside the heads of the creatures, inside the head's of the creatures who are so-called "evil," in order to say, "Look, there's a part of us that's monstrous, and we should be at peace with that."

QA: Do you work in a dark room?

CB: No, I work in a very bright room which faces onto a busy street. I enjoy the fact that I'm doing this incredibly strange activity, letting my imagination go, in exactly the same way I would have studied biology when I'd been in school, with the sun pouring in on my desk. I will work at any hour, but I prefer to work in the daylight, it gives me nicer ideas.

QA: You don't think working in the dark hours is better?

CB: No. There's lots of things to do in the dark, but writing isn't one of them. (laughs)

THE INTREPID AUTHOR ASKS A QUESTION

DONALD: Would you tell us why **Coil** was dropped from the **Hellraiser** soundtrack?

CB: I don't know if you've seen the album that **Coil** produced, but it's great. **Coil** had that stuff, and they felt very anxious about doing a soundtrack for us. But New World [the distributor] wanted a big orchestral score. So New World wasn't happy with what they did, if that's the answer.

DONALD: (While thinking to himself that Clive's answer sounds like deft political hedging, asks yet another **Coil** question) I've heard that they also had a hand in the development of the Cenobites.

CB: Have you read a magazine called **Piercing Fans International Quarterly**? No, obviously not. It's a very specialized magazine. Sleazy [Peter Christopherson of **Coil**, formerly with **Throbbing Gristle** and **Psychic TV**] showed me some copies of **P.F.I.Q.** which were not to be believed! They've pierced parts of their bodies that I didn't even know we had. It's extraordinary. That was my inspiration. Great stuff, I recommend it. Go out to your neighbourhood store and look for it, well you'll never find it. It's very cool, particularly the letters column, read the letters column! [**P.F.I.Q.** #32 is available for $12.50 US from Gauntlet, Inc., 8720 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 94114]

QA: In your work you often talk about the boundaries between pleasure and pain, how do you do your research?

CB: Usually by experiencing both. You know, like eating ice cream with all your fillings out, that sort of stuff.

QA: Do you believe in ghosts and the afterlife; that this is just one state of existence?

CB: Yes, I believe that we are occupying one plane of reality and that there are several others out there, absolutely. And conceivably, one of those planes is occupied by people who were once living and breathing like us. I don't discount that possibility. Certainly I think the world is stranger than we know, and thank God for that, right?

QA: What's the best movie you ever saw?

CB: The best? Every time I'm asked that I change my mind for variety. I think the best horror movie is definitely **The Bride of Frankenstein**. A wonderful movie. Actually Joe Dante has a fresh copy of it, which I was going to see in L.A. last week, but I didn't have time.

QA: What other movies or television shows really influenced you when you were younger?

CB: Well when I was a kid in England, I couldn't see the movies that Mr. Lee [Christopher Lee] was in. I wasn't allowed to see those movies, I guess, until I was seventeen. And



Tom Savini onstage

I wasn't a very old looking fifteen year old. I had a large fat friend called Norman who would buy tickets for both of us. I'd stand in his shadow pretending to look tall. Believe it or not, the first horror movie I ever saw with Norman was **Psycho**. That was a pivotal experience. When I was a kid there was Ray Bradbury and Ray Harryhausen pictures, which I still love.

QA: Do you ever think that you're spreading yourself too thin? Your career has exploded, are you worried about becoming overexposed? I mean with your writing, directing, drawing etc.

CB: One thing is, up until the age of thirty, I was on welfare. I didn't make any cash doing anything. I didn't have an honest job (laughs) I still don't have an honest job! I'd sold some paintings and stuff, but I got to the age of thirty thinking, well at the age of thirty-five I'll become a teacher. What happened was, I got lucky and the book sold and all that kind of thing. Now I feel as though my imagination, which was not repressed for those years but really didn't have an outlet, has kind of exploded. In the limited edition of **Weaveworld** I did a drawing for the frontispiece of a man with these stalks coming out of his head with eyes on top of them. That's how my head feels to me. I feel like there's stuff coming out of my head all the time. I like that. The only thing that will stop me doing that is if those things don't appear at some point. I feel like the clock is ticking all the time. At the end of my life I want them to write on my tombstone, "He was an original."

It's a wacky world in the science labs

Dr. John Collee in **The Observer Sunday Magazine**'s column, *A Doctor Writes*:

In a mad, mad world, it used to be said that only science remained constant. This premise is no longer tenable. Ever since we landed on the moon, science has gone a bit psychedelic. The best indicator of this is the way scientists dress. If you look at films of the fifties and early sixties you will see scientists portrayed as conservative, responsible men and women with haircuts and sensible shoes. Science in those days was a logical, linear affair which demanded little in the way of wacky thinking.

Nowadays, science has progressed so far, and at such a rate, that you need to be slightly insane to keep up.

The surrealist tendency is creeping into every branch of science. "Chaos theory" has winkled its way into botany and embryology, even into subjects as familiar as weather prediction.

It's now regarded as a serious proposition that something as tiny as the flapping of a butterfly's wings might reverberate through the weather system to produce a hurricane in the south of England. Beyond a certain point science is no longer something you do with a Bunsen burner. It's weird. It's eclectic.

Most scientists are no longer wearing sports jackets and horn-rimmed glasses. You go into a science lab these days and they're all in T-shirts listening to Bulgarian choral singing or playing Dungeons and Dragons. Science has gone metaphysical, because beyond a certain point it's the only place to find the necessary models.

Medicine tends to be the exception to this rule. Medical practice is based on "algorithms" - conceptual flow diagrams. The standard diagnostic thought process goes a bit like this: "If A is true, then ask B, if B is true, then ask C. If A, B and C are all true, then the problem must be D and the treatment is E." This can make a doctor's life rather boring, but as a way of curing illness, it's much more effective than guesswork. The treatment we offer to patients must always be validated by logic. In medically related research, however, logic alone will never push forward the boundaries. Even the most practical of sciences needs people who feel at ease with the illogical.



R E Q U I E M

transcript of a subliminal mass



Down in the swirling circle of the storm
there is a leaden eye where no wind blows
and time spins to a stop;
    the minute-hand of action waits,
    the pendulum hangs poised;
but no impulsive works of impotent men
will dull one fury of the looming hour
or brake one moment of its drop.

Northward, swept by the hiss of centuries,
where white wastes wallowed out to whiter skies
and Earth rocked on her pole,
    a radar camp outlined the snow;
    a radome platform creaked:
here, shot from humming pods of fretted steel,
a pulse of semi-automated mind
rang on invisible patrol.

Five miles beyond a bear dove under, shattered
pack and rubble of a freezing ledge
and threw itself ashore;
    taut on the scentless gale he posed,
    then straightening southward, fled,
computing through torn claw and ice the track
of dread propellers churning underfoot
along the Arctic floor.

Racing electronics down the continents,
quick panic rippled out a prescient sea
of nerve: galvanic thrill
    stampeded herds of cariboo
    along the tundra ridges,
bellied wolverine among the pine,
flew down rain forest on the rump of deer,
left gopher chattering, until

a lizard sleeping in the desert sun
unshuttered one slow eye to see what, then
leaped sideways twice and died:
    his private hill crushed back on him;
    the fatal countdown stopped.

Climbing the air, a thousand bombs burst space
at pre-impressed velocities, and launched
their long, inevitable glide.
The curve of her celestial ellipse
Earth endlessly composed, half dark, half light,
at her majestic pace;
beyond in splendour rolled the stars;
while here, computer-based,
all circuits clear, their new Prometheus
punched out in coded electronic shocks
the final hubris of a race.

From two caves carved in Plutonian shield
beneath two deserts, East and West, encased
in concrete overthrown
on steel Hell-bent for megatons
of thermonuclear pressures;
challenging the Universe by force,
this time, of secret sub-atomic fire
from the Suns, effect unknown,

unconquered and unconquerable yet,
he freed his eager miracles for war.
Tartarean armouries,
harnessed in lockstep at command,
blazed rockets to the air.
And now sub-orbital flew rank on rank
and name by name a pantheon of man's
subliminal mythologies:

globe-cursing Atlas, shouldering the world,
and Minuteman whose oath transfigured it,
forefathers of revolt,
now classified ICBM,
inertial guided, range
eight thousand miles, vertex at apogee
in hundreds, warhead hydrogen, presumed
to blot one city at a bolt;

and cold Polaris, guardian of Night,
and Jupiter that braced the shields of Rome,
and Thor, crude Viking Thor,
whose thunder rang on seven seas,
now stamped IRBM,
perimeter and submarine deployed,
range intermediate, quantity produced
for mass retaliatory war;

and Nike squadrons: Hercules who stormed
the syndicates of Hades once, again
atomic, thermo-fused,
the strato-bomber intercept;
and elemental Zeus
who toppled Titans from Olympus, born
the anti-missile missile, that same Zeus
who held Prometheus accused

in treason once before. All these and more
flamed now to terminal velocities:
each one identified,
plotted by radar on a screen,
its counter-strokes applied.
And as they fell, exploding Earth and air,
in one slow cumulative holocaust
Hell melted, and Prometheus died.

Man, who from his mystery unfurled
a gossamer of meaning and a World
to fling a web of thought
amazed across the Infinite,
curled inward, and grew old;
the stars, the galaxies, the speed of light,
the living abstract of his Universe,
and every miracle it caught,

collapsed in swift retreat of consciousness
down blurred processionals of day and night
where fire demon ran
the witching skies instead of sun,
and dragons rose again
to rumble in the caverns of the Earth;
and downward hurled, until at twilight's end,
silent, the long abyss began.

Down in the quiet crucible of storms,
down in the primal deep where no winds blow
and time dreams to a stop,
the minute-hand of action waits,
the pendulum hangs poised...
O God, tell us what perfect works of men
will break the circle of that looming hour,
will void that moment of its drop.

Les Wagar

Fake News

By Carl Guderian

Why do it?

1. It's amusing and cheap.

2. At the very least, it's a great way to exercise the imagination gland.

3. Half the news is bullshit anyway. The problem is you don't know which half. The people creating the news know nearly all of the truth. Those reporting the news know less of the truth. Those reading it know the least of all. By writing fake news you are writing what you know to be 100% bullshit. You make the articles believable by packing them with commonly known facts. If it's plausible, then others are forced to concede the possibility of its partial truthfulness. This works especially well on people who regularly confuse truth with believability. You have something over them because you know something they don't; namely, that the "news report" is absolutely false (as far as you know- see below).

4. In a large enough statistical universe, over a large enough period of time, anything that can happen will happen. This means large, media-saturated populations can support weird events. If the conditions exist for the "news event" to occur, it just may happen. The incident may occur exactly as predicted or just contain some of the elements of the article. If you guess closely enough, you get credit for "predicting the future". All it really is, is explaining the present. It hasn't happened yet, or you would have read about it. (It may have happened but news of it may have been suppressed, in which case you could get into trouble if there was a possibility of your having access to unauthorized information. This happened to Robert Heinlein when he wrote "Solution Unsatisfactory" while the A-bomb was still secret.) It may be happening now, since if it occurred to you it could easily have occurred to someone who is smarter and more enterprising than you are. In that case, you may get credit for clairvoyance if there was no way you could have known about it, although again all you are really doing is predicting what you think is probable. In any case, if you can do this consistently, maybe you can make some money at it.



Become more involved: Participate in the media!

5. If the fake news article is disseminated widely enough, someone may read it, and if it's within his or her power, make it a self-fulfilling prophecy. The article contains some info to get such a person started.

6. Amateur "Reality programmers" and Magick fans can play at being artists, experimenting with other people's Realities using the mass-media spectacle as a canvas. Or something like that. Anyway, this is probably the same thing as the "creative visualization" exercises mentioned by most psychic self-help books.

7. A lot of fake news attains the status of urban legend, such as the ones compiled here in America by Jan Harold Brunvand (author of **The Vanishing Hitchhiker**, **The Choking Doberman**, **The Mexican Pet**, and **Curses! Broiled Again!**). Alligators swimming in the sewers of New York are a good example of incidents people are convinced are really true because "it happened to a friend of a friend." Two really good underground legends come from the Yippies. Paul Krassner claims he invented the story of LBJ fucking the exit wound in JFK's neck after the assassination and it gained acceptance after he printed it in **The Realist**. Abbie Hoffman claimed to have invented Lace, a mythical drug combining LSD and DMSO. Just getting splashed with it would get you high. Narco agents HAD to believe Lace existed because it seemed like just the sort of thing those filthy commie hippies would cook up to menace decent people.

8. The stories could take on lives of their own. If you want to raise some hell, but releasing mutating organisms into the environment seems too dangerous, try doing this instead. It's really fun to hear a distorted version of a rumour you started and compare it with the original. Remember, though, that if your story becomes popular, you may be unable to call it back. That is; exposing it as a hoax will become hard, if not impossible. Also, it might backfire somehow.

9. #3 through #8 could prove to be bullshit, so do it for reasons #1 and #2 or for no reason at all.

Hawkmoth celebrates projects' success

For Immediate Release to All News Agencies
OPERATION JUST BECAUSE

Hawkmoth Enterprises is pleased to announce the success of its project, Operation Just Because. The project was conducted to demonstrate the arrant stupidity of seriously considering altering the ecological (and economic) balance of another country to solve one's own problems. We believe internal problems should be solved internally.

Just Because points out how easy it is to conduct ecological warfare. Expensive, secret laboratories aren't required. Anyone with a grudge, a little know-how, and a basement can have a bit of vicious fun. In this way, the "little people" (the ones who pay taxes) can fight back.

HE is interested in the moral health of this country. Tobacco is a drug. It is more addictive than most illegal drugs and has killed more people than all of them combined. The tobacco companies are America's own drug cartel, paying tier politicians in drug money. Operation Just Because is, therefore a public service. Or perhaps a way to give Jesse Helms and RJR-Nabisco a good kick in the ass.

Ecological tampering is at best risky and at worst dangerously irresponsible. For every ill-conceived plan that is floated before the public as a trial balloon there are a dozen equally moronic ones that aren't. The apocryphal tales of CIA weather experiments in Vietnam are a case in point. Any pack of eco-rapists hiding behind a corporate logo or national flag can do real damage in the long run. For those who don't look beyond the next election or quarterly report, that may not be a problem. However, anyone else disinclined to take the long view or see the big picture might feel the same way and act accordingly. Governments and corporations do not have a monopoly on eco-warfare.

If none of the above explanations are satisfactory, then say that we did this for our own sick enjoyment. This is true also. At least we explained why we did this. And that's the Hawkmoth difference. You don't know who we are but you know what we do and why. With other organizations the reverse is true. Find out.

Anyone could have done this.

Welcome to the nineties.

HAWKMOTH ENTERPRISES
WHERE NOTHING COMPUTES AND ANYTHING GOES.

Tobacco terrorists "playing God"

DURHAM, N.C. (TSI) - The Federal Bureau of Investigation is looking into the possibility that a tobacco worm infestation may be the work of "domestic terrorists."

The unusually pesticide-resistant strain of tobacco worms devastated tobacco crops across the state of North Carolina earlier this year, causing it to be declared a federal disaster area.

The cause of FBI interest is a "press release" faxed to newspaper offices and radio and television stations nationwide last week. It stated that the infestation was the "project" of an organization calling itself Hawkmoth Enterprises. The tobacco worm is the larva of the hawkmoth.

According to the statement, the action was carried out in retaliation for President Bush's request for funds to study the feasibility of dropping coca-eating caterpillars on fields in Peru and Columbia and "to give Jesse Helms and RJR-Nabisco a good kick in the a--."

"It's damned irresponsible," said Anthony Comstock, a local tobacco grower. "They're playing God, unleashing a plague for a cheap laugh."

Special Agent Charles Becker, of the Durham FBI office, refused to comment on the ongoing investigation, but stated that "these people will be caught. No one attacks America's farmers and gets away with it."

Meanwhile, neighboring states have set up roadblocks to stop and search produce trucks and other vehicles entering from the south, in hopes of containing the pest. Virginia has placed a ban on all tobacco products from North Carolina. So far, there have been no confirmed reports of the tobacco worm in other states.



"Somehow, after all, as the universe ebbs toward its final equilibrium in the featureless heat bath of maximum entropy, it manages to create interesting structures."
James Gleick, **Chaos: Making a New Science**

A great new opportunity for information exchange and preservation for the future!

By Stephen Kent

A stimulating development has recently taken place at the University of Alberta for anyone interested in comparative religion, cults, and obscure political and religious groups. Dr. Stephen Kent is setting up a resource centre for information that's traditionally been ignored by the academic world. He's particularly interested in original documents from organizations, clippings, and original research. If you find a particular group interesting, there's a good chance he will too. Time to info-bomb him.



The pre-Reagan Aquarian relics:
One prof now wants them all,
one prof may find them
one prof may bring them all
and on the campus fiche them
Graphic: Turbulence by Donald David © 1990

Back in the 1970's, the kind of material that I now am collecting was readily available- stapled on poles; stacked in piles at head shops; and distributed freely in the streets by freaks, long-hairs, guru-groupies, and blissed-out born-agains. Now, alas, after the Age of Aquarius got Reaganized, most of the alternative religious material from just two decades ago is gone. Much of it is lost forever. Realizing that crucial documents about religiously countercultural life are disappearing, a few of us in and around the Sociology Department of the University of Alberta are busting our love-beads in attempts to collect and archivally preserve what we can find.

In 1985 I received a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada [SSHRC] to study the activities of six alternative religions in Canada during the 1970s and 1980s. These groups included: the Unification Church/Moonies; the Divine Light Mission; Transcendental Meditation [TM]; Scientology; 3HO [the Healthy, Happy, Holy Organization]; and the Hare Krishnas. Early into the project, however, my first priority became the collection and preservation of primary sources, since I saw the appalling condition of many important sources. Moreover, I received stacks of material on other groups from the 1970s (including the Children of God, Alliance for the Protection of Religious Liberty, est, several "countercult" organizations, and a few others). Inadvertently, I had become a hoarder of religious ephemera.

As fate would have it, the University of Alberta Library obtained a $30,000.00 grant to microfiche my rarer primary documents so that future generations of scholars will have access to the information. (Fiche, if properly cared for, may last at least four hundred years.) As this first batch of religious documents is being processed, I am already seeking more information that will serve, I hope, as the basis for further preservation projects. I would be very grateful, therefore, to receive any information about non-traditional or alternative religions that might have value for future generations of researchers and scholars (not to mention our current undergraduate and graduate students). Our grandkids will not believe some of the stuff that we are doing to and about God unless, in the middle of the next century they can read it for themselves.

Nothing is too weird or too heterodox — as long as it is authentic, then I'm interested. Drop me a note, give me a shout, or fax me.

Sincerely,

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492-5234 -messages
492-7196 -fax

Full go-out on the third wave 1

By Darren Wershler-Henry

look out honey 'cause I'm using technology
ain't got time to make no apology
Iggy & the Stooges

Someone — I can't even remember who it was, now — told me that **Rolling Stone** was once a subversive magazine. It was, they claimed, innovative, controversial, irreverent, intelligent, funny... dangerous.

Not in my lifetime.

All I have seen on those rare occasions when I even bother to pick it up off the counter (I work in a record store. I'd never actually pay for the thing) are: fashion spreads full of Biff-the-Frat-Guy clothes I don't wear; articles on musicians who should, by all rights, be dead; and (this is the real pisser of the lot) ads for the glamorous life that you can lead in the U.S. Army. Paul Gott, editor of **RearGarde** magazine, pointed out the exact nature of the problem in the December '89 issue (#38):

If the '70's was the me decade, the '80's were the Not You Decade, when the Me Generation grew up, decided it didn't like growing up, and started living in the past. Unfortunately they've dragged the rest of us with them. (3)

We're all trapped in the Valley of the Yuppies and it's time we started doing something about it.

i will infiltrate your lines
blow up the frozen grammar
you dammed like beavers
your marmalade lives nightmared
by rapids & waterfalls
now & then
i will run the blockades of good taste
canoe words that are dirty &
stinking of rum & castor
right into your letters & evening papers
from yr jails & beds
from the edges where you
would gloss me over
write me out of existence

- Dennis Cooley,
"Bloody Jack" (17-18)

Yeah. Only let's make Cooley's canoe a great big fucking Cigarette boat with huge lurid screaming skulls painted on the gunwales, and fill the air with the throaty roar of its engines, the machinegun rocknroll of **Ministry**'s ***Land of Rape & Honey***, and the stench of hot metal and methedrine.

And let's write about it while we do it/do it by writing about it. It's no fun blowing sweat & mud & blood & brains & exhaust fumes all over the decrepit likes of Jann Wenner[2] without documenting the act for posterity.

PANTHERMODERNS: Though often associated with goal-oriented terrorism (key also BIG VIOLENCE), this subculture is more properly linked to media manipulation and commercial nihilism (key also; CONTEMPORARY HUMOR... URBAN MERCENARIES) MORE
-from the graphic novel adaptation of William Gibson's **Neuromancer**

Gabba Gabba Hey[3]: it's the Nineties kids.

What I would like to put together would be kind of a high-tech/lowlife manifesto: an intelligent street-level look at end-of-the-millennium pop culture, written by the people who live in it and love it. there's so much interesting stuff going on out there: cyberpunk, body modification, hacking, shopping malls, technomagick, psychoactive food, horror movies, tabloid talk-shows, rap music and sampling, skateboard culture, the comic book renaissance, the psychedelic revival.... It would be a shame to leave it all for the academics and the established pop-cult press to pick apart.

"So?" said Edgar, sneering. "If he's such a dangerous shit, how come they want me to study him?"
-K.W. Jeter, **Dr. Adder**

The title: **FLEX YOUR HEAD![4]**, Ian MacKaye's screamed exhortation to the straightedge hardcore youth of the early 80's, a demand for the exercising of thereto unused intellectual muscle. That demand is now being met; here come the Teenage Mutant Ninja Philosophers.

The book's content would be limited to non-fiction prose. Some of the pieces would be applications of major Postmodern critical theorists (Foucault, Jardine, Minsky, Derrida, Barthes, Leary, Gallop, Bakhtin etc.) to various areas of pop culture. Other pieces would be less "academic" in their methodology, for reasons of balance, accessibility and street credibility. hopefully, the book will be a collection written in the widest possible variety of styles, including examples of formal essays, dialogues, rants, transcribed group sessions, cut-ups, marginal scrawls, whatever.

My models for such a project would be journal-magazines like **Semiotext(e), Re/Search, Virus 23, Mondo 2000**--formerly **High Frontiers/Reality Hackers**, and (the late?) **Shred** (arranged in descending order of intellectual solidity). With the exception of **Virus 23**, all of these are U.S. magazines. That leaves plenty of room for some more work to be done on these topics in Canada. I also think that a book would be a good entry-level device for disseminating these ideas to the greater public, because these magazines are (as of yet) underground publications with relatively small circulations.

Besides fascinating content, they also have their high production values to recommend themselves. They're printed on high quality paper in elegant typefaces, and are full of cartoons, sketches, diagrams, photographs and collages. In as image-conscious an age as ours, the visual aspect of a project like this would demand much attention. I know a large number of cartoonists, arts students and graphic artists are out there, all of whom are slavering for an opportunity to strut their stuff.

The time to move on a project like this is definitely now, because by the end of next year this stuff will have hit the popular press in a BIG way. It's already starting to dribble in; **Spin** has been waving the cyberpunk banner for about a year, and they've recently mentioned **Semiotext(e)'s Foreign Agents** series in their "Cold-Rock Stuff" column ("Those obscure objects of obsessive devotion"), and there have even been (tiny) references to body piercing in stodgy old **Rolling Stone**. So: if we can get a book out within a year, we will, in the words of history's only cyberpunk TV star[5], "C-c-catch the Wave."

So how about it? Anyone out there interested in working the Tissue Frontiers? Get crazy. Be dangerous. And alwaysalwaysalways — Be Smart.

Anyone interested in contributing to the **FLEX YOUR HEAD!** project should send their art and/or manuscripts (typed double-spaced hard copy OR soft, on 3 1/2" or 5 1/4" double density floppies- specify IBM [WordPerfect or DOS text] or Macintosh compatible [Microsoft Word or Quark Xpress] on the disk label) to the following address:

FLEX YOUR HEAD! project
c/o **Virus 23**
Box 46
Red Deer, Alberta,
Canada, T4N 5E7

Please include a SASE (if you're in Canada; if not just send the envelope we'll spring for the stamps) so that we can acknowledge the receipt of your work and begin correspondence.

NOTES

1. A "GO-OUT" — a surf session.

"FULL GO-OUT" — like a "GO-OUT," only fuller.

- from SURF PUNKS GLOSSARY 3 (incl. w. album ***Oh No! Not Them Again!***)

THE THIRD WAVE — "humanity faces a quantum leap forward. It faces the deepest social upheaval and creative restructuring of all time. Without clearly recognizing it, we are engaged in building a remarkable new civilization from the ground up. This is the meaning of the 'Third Wave'."

-Alvin Toffler, **The Third Wave** (10).

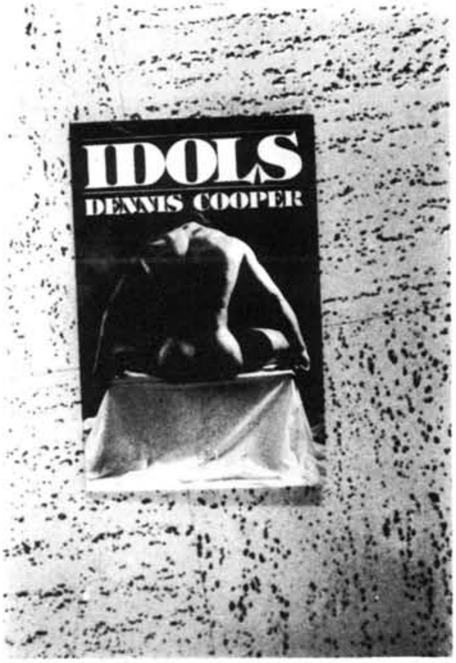
2. Rolling Stone Editor and Publisher.

3. GABBA GABBA HEY: Rallying cry of pinheads and **Ramones** fans everywhere.

4. The (in)Famous last Words on **Minor Threat**'s seminal punk classic "12XU." Shame on you for having to check.

5. Max Headroom.

A.D.o.S.A. Recommends



Idols
by Dennis Cooper, Amethyst Press, New York, 1989, 87 pp.

I became acquainted with Cooper's work when I read an excerpt from his novel **Closer** in the anthology **Between C & D** (Penguin, 1988). It blew me away! The nihilistic savagery that poured from those pages caught me completely off-guard. The selection deals with a pretty-boy Los Angeles acid-head street hustler who allows a particularly perverse gentleman to give him a shot of Novocaine, "So I can take you apart, sans your pointless emotions." Well he does just that, with a knife applied to our young protagonist's posterior. Sick, but powerful. So I went to my local bookstore and ordered a bunch of Cooper's books.

Idols took me by surprise actually, it's poetry, rather than the prose I was expecting. It's really quite a "nice" collection of material he wrote between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five which was originally published about ten years ago. All of the pieces are homosexual sex poems, and I found it to be a bit tedious at times, but they're pretty darned good if you have a taste for this sort of thing. It's more sad than erotic, primarily because it deals with men who are emotionally null and void, unable to experience sensuality and replacing it with sexuality (generally an inferior substitute).

Since **Idols** was written in the '70's, it's crammed full of references to poster-boys like Shaun and David Cassidy, but as far as I'm concerned that just "ups" the hipness factor. My personal favorite is a poem called "If I Were Peter Frampton," which details the choicest auto-erotic manipulations that Cooper could think of.

It is an interesting book, but I prefer Cooper's prose, after about fifty pages it started to remind me of masturbating my clone.



Principia Discordia: Or, How I Found Goddess and What I Did to Her When I Found Her
by Malaclypse the Younger, Loompanics Unlimited, 104 pp.

This is a new edition of the only religious text that matters. This book explains all the secrets of the universe, as we now know it to be firmly grounded in Chaos theory. This is an illuminated (channeled, revealed?) text which explains the religious significance of Chaos. It was published in the late '60's (or maybe 1970, I'm not sure), and predates the development of the scientific theory dealing with non-linear equations, fractals and chaotic behaviour. It's also one of the funniest books in the history of the Earth, and Robert Anton Wilson quotes it all the time, so no doubt you've seen little bits of it before. R.A.W. also provides an introduction to this updated version, so that's one more reason to get it I suppose. The structure of the book itself illustrates the philosophy of Discordianism, which is worship of Eris, the chaos goddess. As an added bonus it parodies every religion there is, and teaches a few nice tricks for reality creation and/or selection. You can even form your own chapter of the P.O.E.E. if you follow the instructions. Learn the dark secrets of the "peace" sign, used by innocent hippies everywhere! Use the Law of Fives to make your friends think you're insane. Discover the sigil of the Holy Chao. This work also includes the plainest and most concise explanation of subjective reality theory I've ever run across. Lots more too! This book should be consumed in conjunction with **Chaos: The Making of a New Science** by James Gleick. **All Hail Eris!**

Semiotext(e) SF #14
edited by Rudy Rucker, Peter Lamborn Wilson, and Robert Anton Wilson, 522 Philosophy Hall, Columbia University, New York, NY.

Three things struck me when I first saw this book: It's a **Semiotext(e)** publication, I respect the editors (particularly R.A.W.- Mr. 23), and it contains works from almost every author in my personal collection of SF- plus several others.

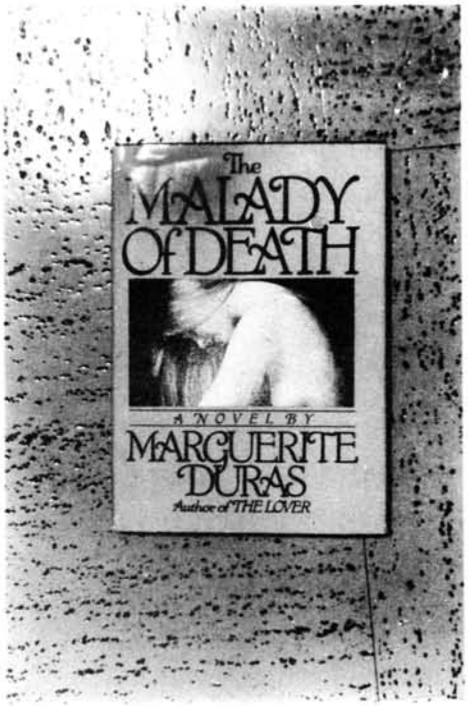
The editors went looking for trouble with their vision of this book. They not only wanted to push the boundaries of SF writing, but to plunge into the depths of "quantum strangeness." Without a doubt, both goals were achieved.

This anthology explodes with ideas ranging from the absurd to the revolting, thanks to a diverse spectrum of writers. The forty five contributors include: J.G. Ballard, W.S. Burroughs, Philip Jose Farmer, William Gibson, Lewis Shiner, Rev. Ivan Stang (of SubGenius fame), Bruce Sterling, Colin Wilson and Sol Yurik. No matter what form of radical humour/erotic/horror/chaos fiction you may enjoy, or at least tolerate, this book has something extreme for your pleasure and discomfort.

In the introduction Rucker and P.L. Wilson write that: "Here then — in 'chaos' — lies the pattern (the "strange attractor," as the chaos mathematicians call it) around which all of our diverse material converges, into an anthology with a clear theme and direction, hard to define, yet unmistakable. The result — though we do say so ourselves — is a book of colossal importance not only for the future of SF, but for the future in general."

Did I mention the high-tech genitalia flip-

book in the bottom left corner? It doesn't matter which way you're flipping either. A hard book to pass up for ten US dollars. -Eric Fletcher



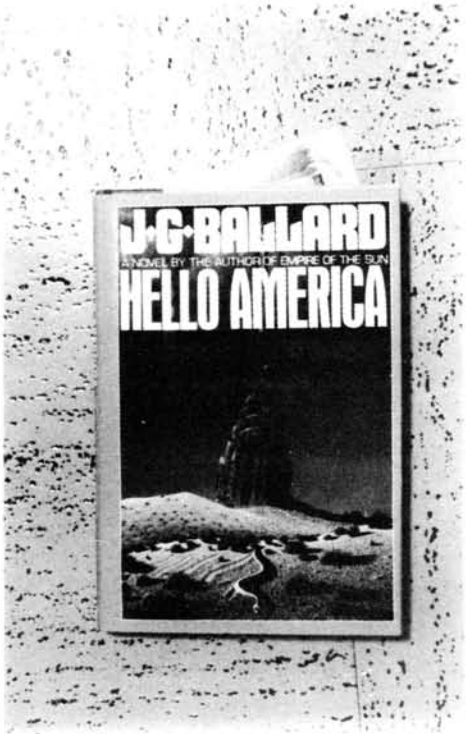
The Malady of Death
by Marguerite Duras, Grove Press Inc., New York, 1986, 60pp.

This novella (or very long short story, I'm not sure what one would call it) should be re-read two or three times to be fully appreciated, and it's a rewarding way to spend an hour or two. Ms. Duras is perhaps best known as a screenwriter, notably Resnais' **Hiroshima Mon Amour**, and avante-garde filmmaker. Her prose reflects this background. She tends to avoid the internal monologue and flesh out the psychology of her fiction using actions and dialogue. Her primary thematic concerns are sexuality, death and decadence, which are explored well with her minimalist prose. The style is very European, absolutely rivetting and totally unique (in my experience).

The Malady of Death deals with a man who may, or may not, have bought a woman to experience the emotion of love. He takes her to his home to study her for a pre-arranged time, and attempts to fall in love before he kills her. Deceptively simple, this is a profoundly disturbing vision of obsession and the pain of being alive. It kind of reminded me of the film **Tattoo** with Bruce Dern, and it covers similar territory.

You ask: Why is the malady of death fatal?
She answers: Because whoever has it doesn't know he's a carrier of death. And also because he's like to die without any life to die to, and without even knowing that's what he's doing.

This work is an excellent companion piece to Duras' **The Lover**, her semi-autobiographical masterpiece of sexual awakening, incest, death, and decay in the Far East. As a bonus, this edition includes notes by Duras as to how the work could be presented on stage or made into a film. Highly recommended!



Hello America
by J.G. Ballard, Carroll & Graf Publishers Inc., New York, 1988, 224 pp.

This was originally published in 1981, but not released in North America until 1988. Undeniably, this is light Ballard, yet the work is replete with his favourite thematic fetishes; ie. airplanes, American pop culture icons (Charles Manson in particular, this time around), architecture, artifice, and the inexorable progress of entropy in the world. Don't misunderstand me though, this book is a hoot, and it made me laugh out loud! Ballard seems to have been in good humour while painting this surreal vision of North America's future. The parade of the robot presidents is worth the price of admission alone.

Hello America is probably a good place to start if you aren't familiar with Ballard's work, or if your only exposure has been that fucking Spielberg movie. After you get a feel for the planes of his reality, you might want to tackle **The Atrocity Exhibition**.

Trick of the Light,
by Stephen Smoke. Beyond Words Publishing, Inc., Hillsboro, Oregon, 1988. 171 pp., softcover, US $9.95 ($13.95 where I bought it, thank you very much Mr. Mulroney).

I'm not sure just why I was motivated to pick up Stephen Smoke's **Trick of the Light**, but when I saw a quote on the back cover describing the author as being "somewhere between Mickey Spillane and Teilhard de Chardin," and a note from the publisher telling booksellers to classify this book as "New Age/ Mystery/ Philosophy," I was intrigued enough to plunk down my money and try it out.

Sure enough, **Trick of the Light** takes the form of a hard-boiled detective novel, starring Nick Sands as the shamus who charges "two hundred a day, just like Rockford." But the rich/ beautiful/ mysterious/ lonely woman who (naturally) walks into his office on the first page doesn't want to hire him to find a missing husband, or a statue of a black bird: "Your ad in the Yellow Pages says you can find **anyone**," she tells him, "...I want you to find God."

This (also naturally) initiates a quest which takes our hero and his client all over Southern California (with a side trip to Vegas), introducing us to a group of generally interesting characters (some with ingenious names like Chris Justice and Alex Crow) in situations both tiresomely mundane and genuinely bizarre. The chapter involving Elvidor — a Las Vegas bed and breakfast proprietor whose mother was equally influenced by Elvis Presley and Salvador Dali — is alone almost worth the price of the book. And, not surprisingly at all, we get treated to a healthy dose of Smoke's mildly Christian/Gnostic, generic oriental-flavoured metaphysical philosophy and speculation throughout the adventure.

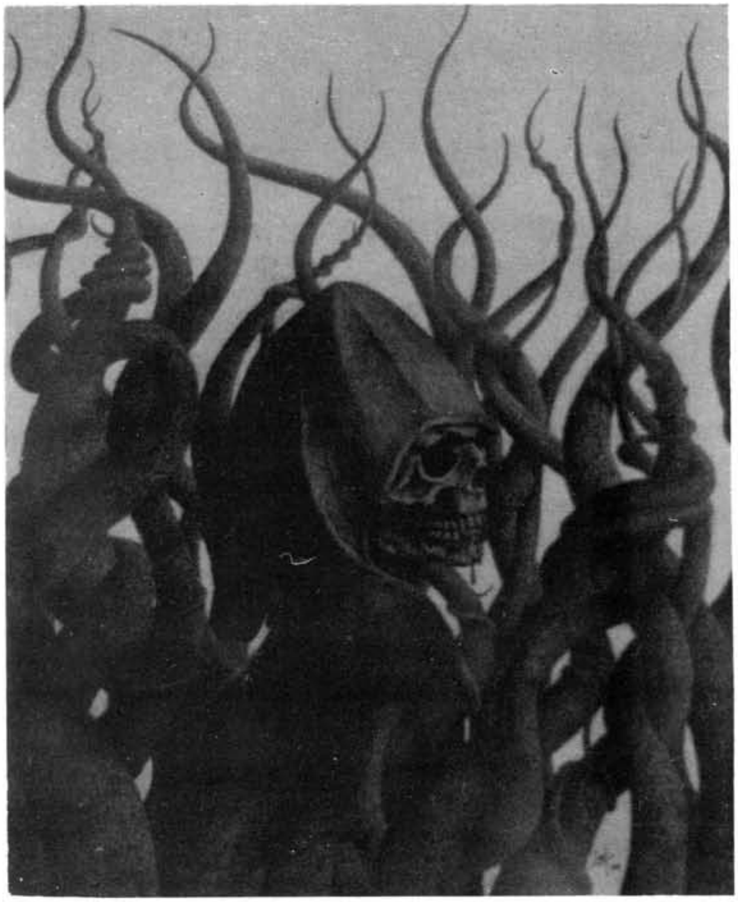
I realize that that all sounds a bit cynical, but I'm not trying to say I didn't **like** the book. I mean I can't really say I agree 100% with his metaphysics- but that's okay; he makes his point fairly well and reasonably unobtrusively. He even manages to toss in a couple of eye-openers here and there. And the writing style is entertaining, with enough well-turned wise-cracks to keep up my interest without bogging down the story too much. I'm even willing to put up with the author's rabid "Just Say No," anti-alcohol, anti-tobacco, drugs-are-inherently-evil attitude. At least he manages to express his point implicitly, rather than getting excessively preachy, (an admirably restrained

position these days).

No, what irks me about **Trick of the Light** is that it simply **doesn't work** as a detective novel. For one thing, Nick Sands doesn't come off as hard-boiled so much as half-baked. One of the novel's main themes is that few people actually observe what is going on around them; exemplifying this, Sands blunders from one misinterpreted situation to the next, resolving at each point not to jump to conclusions next time, usually just as he's getting ready for the next leap. It's a valid point perhaps, but hardly the behaviour we'd expect from a successful detective. At one point, a character tells Sands, "You're lucky you don't have a job where you have to depend on your observations." Uh-huh.

Furthermore, there isn't much suspense, or drama, or even mystery in the plot. Sands and the woman simply go through a linear sequence of contacts, each of whom reveals a little bit more of the novel's theme and then points the way to the next character. No false leads, no red herrings, no real puzzle to keep the reader guessing- this is not my idea of a detective novel. And the frequent genre references (to Chandler, Hammett, et al.) don't help at all.

To tell the truth, I was a bit more sympathetic while I was actually reading the novel. Not bad for a first effort I thought. The only self-indulgence I truly couldn't stomach was Smoke's annoying use of quotations from his own song lyrics as chapter headings, I gleaned this info from a plug for his album at the beginning of the book. But then I got to the "About the Author" blurb on the last page, and I discovered he's the author of no less than **thirteen novels**, mostly "mainstream fiction, primarily psychological thrillers" under his own name and pseudonyms. He's been writing since at least 1981, when one of his novels was nominated for an unspecified Best Private Eye Novel award. So just what the heck is going on here? -Eric Tilbrook



Excursions to the Far Side of the Mind: A Book of Memes, by Howard Rheingold. Beech Tree Books/ William Morrow and Co., New York, NY, 1988. 239 pp., softcover US $7.95 ($11.50 in Canada. Merci beaucoup M. Wilson).

Just as Stephen Smoke is described as a cross between Spillane and de Chardin on the back of his book, Howard Rheingold is described as "somewhere between Hunter S. Thompson and Isaac Asimov" on the back of **his** new book. Is there a blurb writers conspiracy going on that I don't know about? Anyhow, I have no doubts as to what motivated me to pick this one up: (1) The title is **Excursions to the Far Side of the Mind**, which when you think about it, is reason enough. (2) The subtitle is **A Book of Memes.** Any book that mentions memes at all, let alone in the title, is worth checking out. It indicates that the author and I have some common philosophical ground right off the bat. (3) Howard Rheingold is also the author of one of my alltimefave books, **They Have a Word For It** (Tarcher/St. Martin's Press, 1988)- a book that no literate Anglophile should miss. So I bought it.

It's a collection of some fourteen essays on various and sundry topics, many of which have previously appeared (often in a shorter form) in such diverse publications as **California Living**, **Out**, and **Whole Earth Review**. Some of the topics are: visual thinking and its application to modern technology, the physiology of anger/stress/anxiety, the history and psychology of virtual (online) communities, dreaming as a learnable skill, states of consciousness in the future, the sense of smell as telepathy, the future of maleness, and an extremely sympathetic review of an accidentally-attended **Survival Research Laboratories** performance; **"Get** the streetsweeper! **Kill** the streetsweeper!" Does this sound at all familiar? Hell, this could almost be a particularly juicy issue of **Mondo 2000** or **Virus 23**, except there's no artwork or graphics. I mean, look at the major headings in the table of contents: Extraterrestial Anthropology, Over the Edge of Science, Cognitive Technologies (Oh Yeah!), and Magnetic Fieldwork.

Actually, there wasn't a whole lot here that I haven't come across before, (well, maybe the bits about insect sex), but that didn't stop me from eating the book up, cover to cover, and wanting more when I was done. Partly because Rheingold's writing style ranges from snappy/witty, to gosh-wow/enthusiastic, to lyrically moving, his extremely subjective description of the adrenaline rush produced by a serious car crash verges on prose poetry. Partly because there's a number of good pointers embedded in the text to other sources of related neat stuff; it has an excellent bibliography. But maybe mostly because Rheingold has a facility, which I've noted and admired in Colin Wilson as well (especially in **The Occult**). He talks for pages and pages about all this weird shit, and throughout it all he manages to maintain an aura of reasonableness, of believability, of... sanity. This is a pleasant contrast to the works of, say, Timothy Leary, Antero Alli, Robert Anton Wilson, Carlos Castenada, or Tom Robbins, or... well, any of those people who go just a bit **too far** in pushing the limits of credibility, (and yes, I do know that this is often intentional).

All of which brings up another use for this book: As a fellow reader of this 'zine, chances are good that you, like me, have an interest in a wide range of cool, if... ah, offbeat subjects. Chances are also good that you know someone who you think might be interested in these cool subjects, but has been put off by their offbeatitude. Give that person a copy of **Excursions to the Far Side of the Mind**. This will help break down the barriers. Then, maybe you can show him/her that copy of **Re/Search #12**. -Eric Tilbrook

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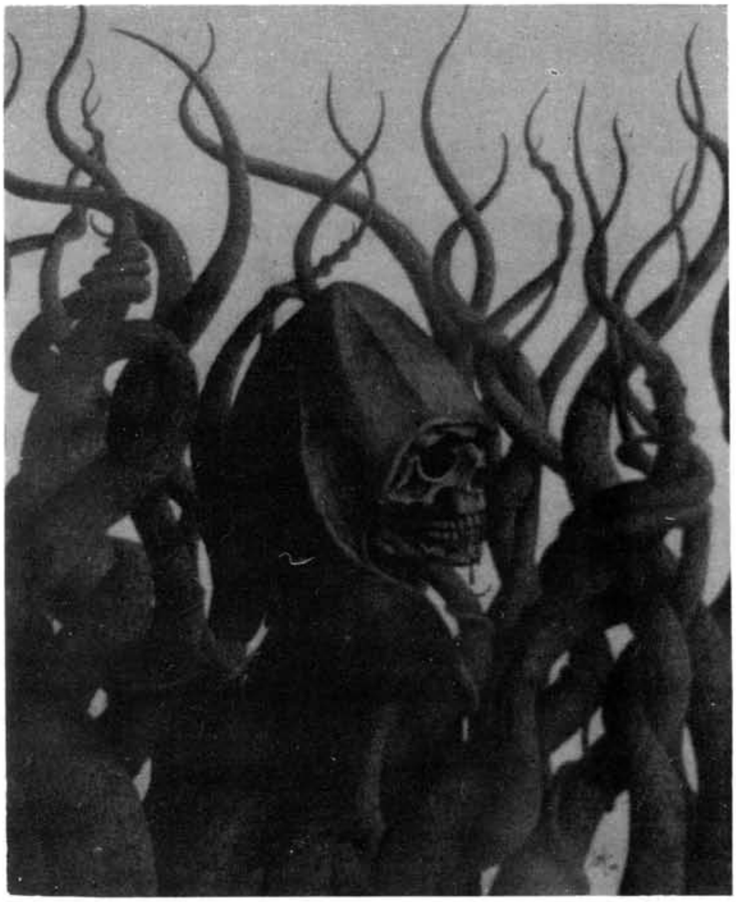
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